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# THE DIAL

MARCH 1928

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VOLUME LXXXIV NUMBER 3

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# THE DIAL

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READERS of THE DIAL are familiar with the writings of that strange figure, WYNDHAM LEWIS, who has been called "the most remarkable example in England of the actual mutation of the artist into a philosopher of a type hitherto unknown." In his new and most important work, "Time and Western Man," he comes into his own. This book is the first thorough-going attack on the philosophy of Time—a philosophy which Mr. Lewis finds dangerous to art, ethics, and to civilization itself. Besides being, as Mr. Humbert Wolfe says, "one of the best natural metaphysicians that England has produced," Mr. Lewis is a novelist and short story writer and is the leader of abstract painting in England. His pictures have repeatedly been reproduced in THE DIAL. He is also known for launching just before the War, in co-operation with Ezra Pound, that explosive review, *Blast*. It is within the last three years, after a period of retreat, that he has turned critic of contemporary society. His rapid output of books in this rôle, *The Art of Being Ruled*, *The Lion and the Fox*, *Time and Western Man*, and the success of his new review, *The Enemy*, have made him perhaps the foremost English publicist of today, excepting only the classical figure of Bernard Shaw.

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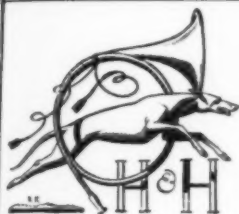
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THE ERIE CANAL. BY ARTHUR B. DAVIES

# THE DIAL

MARCH 1928

## AUREA MEDIOCRITAS

BY JOSEF BARD

Give me, I said, Oh give me  
The Princess  
With eyes of light and hair of light  
Leaping with weightless feet  
On the Lotus-leaves over the lake  
While on the shores, in emerald green,  
Bepearled with the lilies of the valley  
A hundred fairies wait  
And humbly offer  
A hundred dresses to their dancing mistress.  
Give me, I said, Oh give me  
The Princess.  
And a voice from the House said:  
Take the maid  
She is pure and white  
Her father is a lawyer  
Her mother is deaf and blind  
Take the maid  
She is an only child  
She knows how to cook and scold  
And you will be there with the voice  
In the House.  
And I said: Give  
Give me—I said—Oh, give me  
The silence over the sea  
When in a windstill twilight  
The light of the day  
Glides into darkness.



Please, oh please give me  
The silence over the sea—  
I want it in my heart  
And in the hearts of all I love  
And give me, oh, give me—  
A dew-drop's translucency  
The clarity of mountain brooks  
With no mud from the river-bed  
Washed up to heights  
Where light meets clarity.  
With the stillness of the sea  
In my heart  
And the clarity of the dew-drop  
In my soul  
Oh give me  
High up on a sunny peak  
With forest scattered over endless slopes  
Give me a log-cabin  
To live in and see  
The great event that happens once in ages,  
See the fire that only my chosen eyes can see  
And hear the voice only one man's ears can hear,  
See and hear what only one can see  
And hear—the New—  
Which never happens again  
See and hear the Voice of Fire  
Touching the earth  
And the fumes rolling down  
Heavy, dense clouds  
Full of lightning  
Rolling down over the abode of man  
And towering over them in menace  
For endless centuries.  
Give me, I said, Oh give me  
The stillness over the sea.  
And the voice from the Town said—  
Said the Voice from the Town:  
There is a job for you in a bank  
I know the Manager, he is quite a friend,  
You write out figures in a big book,  
There is a cheap restaurant round the corner

And a tea-shop for the afternoon.  
The chief-cashier is old and asthmatic  
Soon you may be in his place—  
And cash cheques and change money  
Change foreign notes, in many colours  
Issued in Rome, Paris or Cairo.  
You will have long week-ends  
And a car, and ride down to the sea,  
With friends and take a lunch-basket  
And eat sandwiches on the shore,  
And break the eggs, the hard-boiled eggs  
On the harder pebbles on the shore.  
Sunday night you come back  
And you live with me  
The Voice in the Town.  
And I said—  
Give me—I said—Oh, give me  
A cause I can love and die for—  
Or let me fight for the liberty of man  
From sin, from ignorance and  
From the heaviness of the body.  
Or let me die in quest of the Holy Grail  
Or fighting against the Turks  
For the sepulchre of the Saviour.  
Oh give me a man I can love  
And die for,  
Marc-Aurel, sitting pensive in his tent,  
Writing his Meditations late at night  
While the battle cry of the wild cymbers  
Reached only his ears and not his mind.  
Or give me pug-nosed Socrates  
Feasting amid his ribald pupils  
Tempting his even wisdom  
With their seductive charms.  
Oh give me—I said—Oh give me  
Prince Gautama, sitting under a tree  
Till his soul made a sieve of his body  
And flowed out from its isolation  
Back into the all-one of Eternity.  
Oh give me—I said—Oh give me  
A cause and a man.

## AUREA MEDIOCRITAS

And voices rose from a confusion  
And the voices of the confusion said:  
Hee-hee-hee, hee-hee-hee,  
Eat more fruit,  
Eat more bread—  
Keep more fit—  
Love your fellow-men—  
Go to the races—  
Play more bridge—  
Play more golf—  
All men are equal,  
Fight for the poor—  
Fight for the rich—  
The negro and the Jew  
Are also men.  
Make more money—  
Get more adapted—  
Use a better soap—  
Wear the right shoes—  
Be more efficient  
But still go to Church,  
Help to fight the reds—  
Help to fight the whites—  
Be more successful—  
Make a life-insurance—  
Eat more fruit—  
Wear the right clothes—  
Don't think much  
Don't feel much  
Keep in a pink middle.  
The head of your office,  
The manager of your bank,  
Whoever he may be  
Is the wisest of men  
As long as he is at the head.  
Go to lectures, listen to Professors,  
Learn about birth-control,  
Learn about eclipses,  
Listen to Professors,  
Don't you miss your pennyworth  
Of knowledge which the Professors  
Hand out to the poor.

Love your King or President  
And your God and Nation  
And your lunch and dinner  
Keep more fit  
Eat more fruit  
And you will live with the Voices  
In Confusion.  
And standing high up on a hill  
With the sea stretching under my feet  
I said loud into the twilight  
Give me—I said—Oh, give me  
The youth of life that Nature had  
When in playful exuberance  
She made the deep sea-fish  
And the designs  
On the wings of the butterflies.  
Pan may be sleeping but he is not dead—  
And though grey the colours  
On the brush of painters  
And grey and small are men  
And grey the words  
That pelter lifeless from their lips  
Pan is not dead—  
Standing upon the hill  
I said: Pan—Not dead!  
Standing upon the hill  
I said: Give me—Oh Pan, Give me  
A sign.  
Rain fell and buried my eyes.  
Clouds darkened.  
Give me a sign—Pan.  
The eye of light broke the veil.  
Through thick rain golden laughter  
Met with my face.  
And I whispered: Pan  
I see your trail, where you flee  
Far from man, the greyiness.  
I come.  
House, town, confusion,  
Lost their voices.  
My way was free

## THE SWAMPER

BY WALTER D. EDMONDS

THEY said that he had lost his mind: at any rate he could not remember anything for very long. That was why he kept on as swamper for Amos Gives's Saloon for so many years. Any man who worked for Gives must have been a half-wit; and if old David got a free supper and breakfast out of the establishment, he got precious little more except the cussing Amos gave him every morning.

David (God help him!) used to come into the bar at five o'clock every morning: that was his regular hour; so there he was at sunrise on this first Saturday in May, unlocking the door with his key. He stopped on the porch and looked down the canal; the saloon was built on the wharf at the top of the hill, so that boaters could come right down the gang, as soon as they tied up, and walk through the bar-door in three steps if they wanted to. This village was quite a place in 1879; three saw-mills on the Black River, which ran past the foot of the town; and the town itself rising up the hill in two tiers of houses. The saloon and Widgeon's hotel stood at the top. The canal licked along their foundations, and the road, coming over the bridge, ran on a level with the second-story windows. What with the mill-hands and the loggers that came in on Saturdays, and the farmers and the boaters, there must have been two thousand people here. And if you were sending a letter to any one of them, instead of "Hawkinsville," you wrote "Slab City, N. Y." on the envelope; and put "Oneida County" in the lower left corner, if you were particular. It really was quite a place: there were a tannery and four stores (dry goods and groceries) and three blacksmiths, and three churches, not counting the Lutheran Church across the canal at the top of the hill. It was just opposite the saloon, so that Mr Ennory used to say that you could see Heaven and Hell in Slab City, right before your eyes, and doing a pretty good trade at that. And if William Durkin was round and drunk (he generally was) he would always want to know which was which.

So here was old David on the stoop of the saloon that morning on the first Saturday in May, 1879. There were three boats loading matched spruce boarding for Albany tied up at the wharf. He could hear the horses getting up in their stalls in the bows and rattling their halters. It was a warm morning, with a bit of mist on the river, and very still, so that the canal looked like black silk under the rising sun. David pulled out his pouch of Warnick and Brown, Heavy, and filled his pipe and lit it before opening the door. He looked feeble with his straggly grey hair and weak eyes, and his match shook so in his hand that the flame could hardly grab hold of the stick. But he sucked the smoke deep into him and then let it out in a long stream. It was the only smoke in boat or house.

When he went inside, he saw the bar was well enough, so he built a fire in the big chunk stove to take off the damp and another in the kitchen stove to heat water for Amos's shaving. Then he got his pail and mop and put a lot of water on the floor. After he had done that, he went up and knocked at Amos's door and came away, for Amos was a mean man in the early morning. David came downstairs and took the water back off the floor: that was what he called mopping.

He went out into the kitchen and sat down to wait till the water boiled. He couldn't hear Amos stamping round upstairs as usual, but that did not bother him. There was not a sound in the house; and David looked out of the window at the river valley. The mist floated along up-stream on a level with the lowest houses, hiding the meadows; and as he sat there, David began to hear cow-bells tinkling on cows coming in from night-pasture.

The sound was quite clear and full, as sound is in misty weather, and it kept breaking out at different parts all along the valley, until all the mist was ringing like one bell. He must have listened for quite a while, because all at once he heard the kettle boiling loud enough to make him jump and run for a pitcher, which he filled and took upstairs. He stopped at the door, but there wasn't a sound out of Amos, so he knocked again. As Amos did not swear, he opened the door and put the pitcher on the wash-hand-stand.

Then thinking he would like to see what Amos looked like when he was asleep, he went over to the bed. The window was open a crack, and he could hear the cow-bells quite clearly.

Amos Gives was lying on his side with his legs drawn up, and David looked at him a while before he went downstairs and out on the stoop. He sat down in a chair and knocked out his pipe and put in another load. The sun had come in under the roof to warm him so he shoved his hat back on his head, put his feet on the rail, and spat a good spit clear over the wharf into the canal.

He could see a boat drawn by a black team coming up round the bend from Boonville. The boat hung low in the water and the team were having heavy work bringing it up against the current. It would take them all of fifteen minutes to reach the wharf.

The town below was beginning to wake up. David could smell the rising breakfast smokes. On the road he heard a man shouting and a moment after, a four-horse team came out on the dock with a wagon-load of lumber. They drew up opposite the last boat in the line, and the driver went aboard and pounded on the cabin door. At the same time four men appeared from the hotel and began listlessly to hand the lumber into the pit. The boarding was light; one man could handle it alone; so the four had made a line of points between which the boards were raised and lowered, like inch-worms walking. The driver and the boater came over to the saloon.

"'Lo, Dave," said the driver.

"'Lo," said David.

"Mornin'," said the boater.

"Mornin'," said David.

The two men sat down, the boater removing a battered pipe-hat which he placed under his chair. David did not recognize him. He was a big man with a hearty complexion and a nose like an apple. He wore a dark green shirt without a tie under his loose yellow waistcoat, and his brown trousers just reached the tops of his cow-hide shoes.

"Saloon open?" he asked loudly.

"No," said David.

A woman came out of the cabin of the second boat. She was tall, with hawk-like grey eyes, a strong chin, a fine full figure.

"Mornin', folks," she said.

"Mornin', mam," David replied for all of them.

He knocked out his pipe.



"'Baccер?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat, offering his pouch.

"What kind?"

"Mechanic's Delight."

"Don't never smoke it. That's railroad tobacco. Warnick and Brown's mine. I used to boat it," said David.

"Did you really?" asked the boater, slightly huffed. David looked too out-at-ends and weak and watery ever to have done anything.

"Eanh," said David. "I boated it."

"That's right," said the teamster. Then he leaned over to the boater.

"David's twirly," he said, indicating his head with his thumb. "Used to be a rich man hereabouts; had a boat of his own. Man of the community; always making money; trying for more. Thought he'd get it by marryin' his daughter to Uberfrau for more money. Didn't work. She ran away. Dave went to pieces; lost his money. Got twirly; look at him."

David listened with a critical cock to his head.

"That's right," he said.

"Poor man," said the woman, pityingly.

"Eanh," continued the teamster, putting flavour in his voice. "Went round by himself after she went off with the boater; he rotted inside, I guess, and went twirly. Been that way for ten years. She was a fine gal; lot of us tried for her. Now look at him; he's a sight to see. Swamps the bar-room for two meals a day and sleeps in the mill barn, long side of my team—they're good uns. Twirly, but he's all right. Sort of mischeevous—like a chipmunk. Tell you all about his gal. Says she's a fine lady, now; claims he hears from her; claims she's comin' back to take care of him now he's old. Ain't it right, David?"

"Eanh," said the old man. "Gettin' kind of doddery so she's a-comin' back."

"I feel sorry for him," said the woman; "that's the truth. Poor old man!"

"Funny thing," said the boater.

The sun had come out very hot, and a small breeze rose to flick

the water into ripples. The mist had burned away from the river; the meadows shone green here and there with new grass.

"Anne!" roared a man's voice from the second boat. "Where in hell is my shirt?"

The tall woman made a face and went back into the cabin. The teamster twisted himself in his chair to get at his handkerchief.

"Gol," he said. "There's Simms coming in with his boat."

David grunted.

"I seen it."

As the black team passed them, the boat slid in to the wharf.

"New team," said the teamster.

"Whoa!" yelled the man who was driving them. "Can't you stop when I tell you?"

The horses were quite ready to stop; they lowered their heads and seemed to let go of the muscles in their ears and flanks.

The man who was steering ran to the rail and flung a rope ashore which the driver caught and, as the boat ground against the wharf timbers, snubbed to a post. They drew in the bows and tied them. The man on the boat slid a broad gang to the wharf and lifted the roof of the bow compartment. It went up like a box-trap, leaving a door open in the side of the boat; and the team went aboard for breakfast. The three men on the stoop could see them turn round and face the shore before the man lowered the trap. Then they heard the harness jingle as the team shook themselves.

"'Lo, Simms," said the teamster. "New team?"

"'Lo, George. Yes they be. Cheap, too."

"Pretty good. How much?"

"Two fifty. Say . . ."

He came forward, an angular, middle-sized man with blue shirt and black hat, wearing a gossip's expression.

"Well?" asked the teamster.

"Got a passenger."

"Smells like fertilizer to me."

Simms lost his dramatic forward bend, then recovered.

"Yes," he said. "I'm peddling it. I've got a passenger, though."

"Where from?"

"Utica. She signed my cabin at Bentley's Oyster Booth and Bar."

"*She?*"

"I thought that 'd fetch you," said Simms, smirking. "Yes, sir. A fancy woman. Gownds. Dresses. Powders in the morning. Got a New York hat. Took my cabin; and me and Henry slept with the horses. Turn about at the stove."

"What's she coming here for?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"I don't know. Aims at business, she says."

"What in?"

"Aims to start a bar. She used to work at Bentley's, I hear."

"Not Amy Silverstone?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"Yes, *sir*. I never seen her before. But that's her name. Swell and stylish and tiled with money. Fancy woman, she is."

"Well, I'll be dredged," exclaimed the boater with the pipe-hat. "What she'd want to come here for, beats me. They give her a name on the Erie"—he went on with a leer—"she ran a cook's agency. She had a name all right. She did more than run the bar."

The man on the second boat came out of the cabin followed by the tall woman.

"Guess I'll have a drink," he said. "Hot day. I'm dry."

"Mornin'," said David for all of them.

He sat up with importance.

"The bar ain't open."

"Oh hell," said the boater, and he sat down, while his cook sat down, too, a little way off from the men.

"Anne," he yelled at her, "go back and clean up! Think I'm paying you wages just to look at you?"

The tall woman tossed her head.

"You'd better look at me while you have the chance, Goudger."

"Git on back, dang you!"

"I'm no slave," said the tall woman. "It ain't hard for *me* to find work."

"Oh, all right."

"Speaking of bars," said the teamster, turning to Simms, "your passenger'll have a job getting Amos Gives's trade."

David coughed and gazed critically at the tiller of Simms's boat. "No she won't," he said.

The others slewed round at him.

"Kind of twirly," explained the teamster. "He don't mean harm."

They relaxed.

"I wish this damned saloon would open," said the man the cook called Goudger, plaintively. "I'm dry."

"It won't open," said David.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Goudger. "That's a good un. Won't open on Saturday with the loggers coming in. Haa, haa! Wait till I tell Amos."

"You won't tell him," said David, and he spat.

"Why not?" said Simms, sarcastically. "Wouldn't you tell us why not, Dave?"

"Eanh, I reckon so. I'm goin' fishing."

They guffawed.

"Thinks Gives'll let his swamper go fishing on Saturday!"

"He won't stop me," said David. "He's dead."

They fell silent and rather white.

The tall woman had laughed, shrilly. . . .

They stared uneasily at the windows behind them.

"What's wrong?" asked a woman's voice.

The men swung about to face the canal. Simms's passenger was coming on to the stoop. She was something to see. She had a short, plump figure, a wide mouth, and cool, affable, blue eyes. Her brilliantly yellow hair was done up in curls at the back of her head. She wore a stiff, apple-green dress with full skirts, a short coat of the same colour trimmed in scarlet, and a red and green hat beflowered with yellow pansies, which was drawn down tight on her head. Her plump, pink hands came forth from the throats of her long yellow gloves, and the rings on her fingers threw glitters all over her breast. Her voice was hearty and had a cheerful lift to it.

"What's wrong?" she repeated.

The men had all been shaken pretty badly; but the teamster managed to explain, while the rest gaped at the woman. She gave

the teamster her full attention, bending toward him with a suggestion of graciousness. As she listened, she composed her features to a proper expression of melancholy, so that little lines made themselves apparent under her rouge—particularly about her mouth and nostrils. Then she straightened up and gave them another shock.

"Of course, it's too bad," she said. "But it amounts to the same thing as evacuation of the premises, don't it? You see, I own it; it belongs to me; I bought it last month; and he was to move out to-day."

"He ain't going to dispute that," said David.

She gave them a fine smile; and they realized all at once that she had looks. There was something cool about her; they liked her.

"I guess as Mr Gives went out this way, I'll have to keep the bar closed to-day. But I'll open it Monday night. My name's Amy Silverstone and I'll be glad to see all you gents here then. From seven to eight all drinks is on the house. Now will somebody be so obliging as to fetch a doctor?"

She swept past them with a swagger of her full skirts.

"Fancy woman," said Simms, with pride in his voice.

The teamster went off for the doctor and Lawyer Gannet.

"By gol," said the boater with the pipe-hat, "you'd hardly think she had a name on the Erie, now, would you? Well, she has."

"I've heerd tell," said one of the men who had been unloading lumber, "I've heerd tell that she's the hardest drinker on the Big Ditch."

"That's right," said the boater. "To see her so re-fined and bold-looking, you'd hardly think it was so. But when she was into Bentley's, she'd drink with any man who'd ask her; and she'd never say no. Lots of times a man would set himself up to drink her down under, but he allus gave way first. Jeepers! Half the time she'd take him off to bed, and then come down and start in drinking again, cold sober as your Sunday razor."

There was a general murmur in the group.

"It don't hardly seem true," said Goudger; "but I've heard plenty as had seen her say it was."

"She has her own partic'lar drink," said someone else.

"Eanh," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "She always drinks her own."

"She's a fancy woman, all right," said Simms. "Look at the cool way she took hold here. Old Dave had nothing on her."

"Hell!" growled Goudger. "Now I don't get no drink at all. Anne, you wash them dishes—hear me?"

He herded the tall woman off to the boat.

"What're you going to do now?" asked the boater with the pipe-hat.

"I'm going fishing," said David.

He got up slowly and went back down the hill through the town, walking stooped over, his tattered trousers dragging about his heels, his hat on the back of his head, his watery eyes peering from side to side.

The others could see puffs of smoke pop back past his ear now and then, until he disappeared into the mill barn.

"Funny thing," said the boater with the pipe-hat, dubiously.

David had the right of it all round: the saloon did not open; nobody told Gives; and he went fishing.

He got some cheese sandwiches at the hotel, and the cook gave him some bad potato cuttings in a bag. He walked a mile up the canal to Izzard's Cove and sat down on the tow-path. When he had lighted his pipe, he baited a hand line with a piece of potato and threw the hook out into the water. Across from where he sat lay Izzard's old boat. It had been tied up there to the far shore for five years now, ever since the smallpox epidemic when they had isolated Izzard and his cook and driver in the set-back. It was one of the few things David remembered perfectly. He had had to bring provisions up from the store every morning and leave them at the foot of the tree under which he now sat. Then he would go back a way while the cook or the driver would row slowly over in a boat and get them. After they had rowed back, David would return and give the news across the intervening water and ask about old Izzard.

Old Izzard had died; the others came out after three months and went away. Later on it got about that Izzard had not died of smallpox. But David put no stock in such rumours.

It was a gloomy spot in which to spend a holiday; but it was a great piece of water for carp, being the only set-back for a mile

each way. The heavy-headed fish ran in there out of the current and lay on their bellies on the bottom, nosing the rudder of Izzard's old boat. David could read the name on the stern of it—*LUCIUS P. IZZARD, Boonville.*

It did not make much difference how the old devil had died; it was good riddance, David said to himself. If it hadn't been for Izzard with his high notional talk about the canal, David's daughter, Molly, would have married Uberfrau who owned the mill and had a fine house to live in, and David could have given up boating for a comfortable life. The old boar-hog! He'd snitched her right out from under his nose; and not hide nor hair had he heard of her since, in spite of his keeping up stories about her for the form of it. She was probably cooking it for some boater on the Erie, now. She might be married; David doubted it. She was too ignorant a girl to get away with a thing like that; she'd trust a gipsy with a twenty-dollar gold piece; she was that kind—most likely she was dead. . . .

It had hit David hard, her going off like that—look at him now. He leaned over and looked into the water at himself, swamper of the Slab City Saloon.

Then he had a bite, and he settled down to fishing. . . .

On Sunday mornings, David usually got up pretty late. He had learned the news the night before: Lawyer Gannet had verified the fancy woman's statement; and the doctor had verified David's. He said that Gives had died of apoplexy. The saloon was in new hands.

That did not disturb David. He let himself into the bar; and then wrinkled his nose in disgust. Mrs Silverstone had been busy. The bar was clean as a whistle; there were fresh calendar pictures tacked to the walls; the stove was blacked and the cupola top had been painted with gilt; the bar and the floor were oiled down slick. Even the windows had been washed.

He counted four new spittoons along the bar, bright brass ones. "Cripus!" he snorted. "Jeepers Cripus!"

He spat on the side of the stove. He was outraged. He lifted his voice and shouted querulously, "Saaay! Who's been monkey-ing with my saloon?"



Someone stirred upstairs in Gives's bedroom; firm slippered steps advanced to the head of the stairs; a pair of feet appeared on the treads; and slowly Mrs Silverstone came into view. The fancy woman had on a night-gown under a bright red wrapper, and her brilliant yellow hair dangled in curl-papers, with a row of odd little metal pins along her forehead. David stepped back abashed. Her plump face was lathered and she carried a razor in her right hand.

Suddenly the lather crinkled and broke over her mouth, and she grinned. She came up to the old man with her buoyant walk, the swagger noticeable even without her flaunting skirts.

"Say, old man, how'd you come in?"

If Mrs Silverstone had been impressive in her giddy clothes, in this war regalia she was stunning. David took his eyes off the razor and some of his indignation gave way to timidity, for the exhilaration of the preceding day's events was wearing off. He held up the key and muttered surlily, "I'm swamper into this saloon."

"Ah," said the fancy woman. "Be you really?"

She rested the knuckles of her right hand on her hip and leaned against the bar. It was an attitude calculated to please; but the razor and lather gave it an outlandish touch. David repeated with a slight whine, "I'm swamper into this saloon."

"Well," said the fancy woman, "if you're swamper here, clean up that spit before you're fired."

David lifted hand and voice to protest, but he met the fancy woman's eye.

"Clean it up," she commanded.

"Eanh." He was abject.

When he had finished, the fancy woman told him to sit down.

"Now," she said, in a pleasanter voice. "You're David, ain't you?"

"Eanh."

"You're an old man, ain't you? You ain't much good for work."

David shuffled his feet and looked into his hat, which he had just thought of taking off. "I'm allowed pretty good with a mop," he said.

"Look here, old man. Who do you think cleaned up this filth to make it look like this? By Jeepers, I ought to know how you swamp, if anybody does!"

"Yes mam," said David. "I guess you do."

She was mollified, apparently, for she came over to the bench and sat down beside him. The sunlight played over the two of them from the east window, and the fancy woman's full figure in the scarlet wrapper made a great blob of colour that the floor caught up in reflections about her feet. She wiped the lather from her lips with the back of her hand and pulled a cigar out of her pocket.

"Got a match?"

David lighted it for her. She crossed her legs, regardless of convention.

"Old man, you and me'd better talk business."

"Eanh," said David, scenting a turn in his favour and pulling out his pipe.

The fancy woman mouthed her cigar and puffed leisurely.

"Now," she began, "this ain't the first bar I've run. I know the trade; but I'll be eternally tarred if any bar of mine is going to look like this one did. I'm going to get all trade, mill-hands and the more re-fined—they as want to smell their likker. Now I'll try you out as a swamper; but you'll have to clean to suit *me*. No smooching in the corners; and the floors oiled every week. Hear me?"

"Eanh," said David.

"All *right*," said Mrs Silvertone. "Now, I've got my own 'keep a-coming up from Utica, see? And he can handle any rum-pus if I need help—which I generally don't. But I'll want you round for odd jobs. I won't have you looking like a junk-heap, so I've got some clothes for you, new pants, shirt, and shoes. You'll sleep out back in the kitchen, and you'll get your meals, and two dollars a week extry. Take it or leave it."

"I guess I'll take it," said David, mustering his dignity. "Sold!"

The fancy woman smiled; she seemed to have a liking for the old man.

"You're pretty old, ain't you?"

"Middlin'," said David.

"What happened to make you swamp for such a cheap bar? They tell me you owned a boat, once."

David launched on his sorrows.

"That's right. Me and my datter used to boat it, up and down the Erie, Buffalo, Syracuse, New York a lot of times. I had a farm here, and a man to work it. But she went away on me. Sneaked out, she did." He put his hand to his eyes. "She was a purty little gal, black-haired she was, kind of soft like. I was all tore up when she sneaked on me. Yes, mam, she went away, she did, and left me, a pore old man, and here I be a-swamping."

"Pore old man," echoed the fancy woman. "They tell you was mean to her."

"Mean? Me mean? Say, would she be writing to me every week if I was mean? Married to a pork dealer she is; and she's coming back to look out after me, she writes. Would she do that if I was mean—her such a quiet little gal, and gentle with no harsh ways?"

He sobbed at the recollection and pulled out a red cotton handkerchief to wipe his eyes. The fancy woman stared out of the window as if she had not heard.

"Mebbe I was mean," said David; "by her lights I might've been. But I done it for the best, and she won't hold against me. Say, you never seen her, did you, when you was on the Big Ditch? Molly, she was; a little black-haired girl; kind of trembly ways?"

"No," said Mrs Silverstone. "I never did."

She stretched her plump figure, raising her arms over her head, so that the razor tossed swift glitters of sunlight between the beams. She yawned, got slowly to her feet, and went over to the bar, where she paused to examine something. David followed her.

"Nosey!" she said looking up at him with a grin. She paused, then spoke to him again. "See them bottles? That's my special mixture. The Delta Distill'ry puts it up for me; I have to have it with all the drinking I have to do for sociability and business. Now I ain't mean. I don't grudge you a swaller now and then; but *that* stuff costs money, and if you touch it, by Cripus, I'll ride you for fair!"

David took a look at her and backed away.

"Now you set down till I've dressed," she said, tossing her cigar into one of the new spittoons, "and then I'll learn you to clean good."

"Yes mam," said David.

He listened to her moving round in her room for a minute, then put on his hat and sneaked over to the bar with elaborate caution.

"Ride me?" he snorted. "The old rum-hugger!"

He found a loose cork in one of the bottles, and his watery eyes gleamed. Leaning over, with the sunlight coming along the bar to fall on the small bald patch on the top of his head and the end of his nose, he looked like a thieving chipmunk. He worked the cork out, raised the bottle to his mouth and, with a great effort, swallowed noiselessly.

A look of tearful surprise enshrouded his face. He replaced the bottle, hurried over to a spittoon, and emptied his mouth of the liquid.

Her particular mixture! The old scut!

He sat down again and watched the stairs with furtive eyes as the fancy woman began to descend. . . .

When he sat down on the stoop of the saloon on Monday evening, David smarted inwardly from the sarcasms of Mrs Silverstone. He had done nothing right, according to her notions; and he objected, anyway, to being ordered round. It wasn't as if he had never swamped before. He had done it for years.

The new bar-tender had arrived to exasperate him further, for he regarded David as a personal slave. How could David dispute him? The man was a big, black-haired fellow with the forearms of a smith and the fists of a prize-fighter. He wore very tight clothes, a red waistcoat, and a top hat tilted to one side. He was almost as fancy as the fancy woman herself. It made David snarl to think of him. In spite of the good supper in his insides; he recalled Amos Gives almost with approval.

But he had new clothes on and a dollar of his wages in his pocket—the other dollar being on him and in him in the form of a new hat and two glasses of whiskey. His feelings were verging on exuberance. With the bar behind him opening for the first

time under the new management, it was plain that he regarded himself as a figure of importance.

It was seven o'clock. The sunset had tinged some clouds above the canal with bright orange. Four boats were tied up at the wharf and a big lumber-raft was in the making just below the bridge. The sounds and smells of cookery floated from the cabins of the boats; and in one of them a man was singing hoarsely. In the bar David could hear Mrs Silverstone and the new 'keep putting on the finishing touches. Now and then one glass rang against another.

A man and a woman came off the end boat in the line. David recognized Goudger and his cook, the tall woman who had laughed hysterically at the news of Gives's death.

"'Lo, Dave," said Goudger.

"Evenin'," said David.

"Bar open now, eh?"

"I reckon."

"I see they're a-keeping you on."

"They be," said David.

Goudger stroked the back of his neck, glanced at David, at the door, and tramped inside. The woman sat down on the chair next to David's.

"Evening, mam," said he.

She smiled.

Other men came to the stoop and spoke to David and went inside. David gave them all greeting with an air. You might have thought, almost, that he was proprietor of the saloon. He pushed his hat back on his head, hooked his thumbs through his galluses, tilted his chair against the wall. He smoked incessantly. "'Lo," he said, and, "Evenin', Pete;" "Yes it does seem like a droughth coming on;" "Them new horses of Slinger's looks fair to middling, all right, but I'll bet they're over nine;" "Eanh, business is so-so. 'Course it ain't Saturday, but you wait."

They passed him, good-humouredly responsive to his comments. The woman stayed at his side.

"No taste for likker, mam? Very good gin from the new Rome distill'ry. Some prime whiskey."

The tall woman said nothing; but she smiled, a thin little smile,

whenever he spoke. She leaned forward in her chair, elbows on knees, chin in hand, her eyes moody. David said to himself that she was a fine specimen of a woman; he didn't remember seeing many as good-looking. There was something bold about her, too. She had a deep-fringed blue shawl over her shoulders and a straight wool dress that managed to bring out her figure, here and there.

While he looked at the tall woman, who in turn stared down the canal, David started to hear a voice murmur, "Pardon, David."  
"Eh!"

"Beg pardon, Dave. Sorry to interrupt. Is thish th' saloon?"

The speaker swayed unsteadily on his feet and regarded the two others with a vague earnestness. David grunted.

"My name's Will'am Durkin, mam! Pleasure."

He turned to David.

"Say, Dave. What's thish I hear about the fancy woman—drinking with everybody all night long and not saying no or turning up her toes? Jeepers, that ain't in nature and I don't believe it, do you, mam?"

The tall woman remained silent.

"I don't believe it can be done. Been tryin' it m'self for twenty-two yearsh. B'Jeepers! I'm a-goin' 'o see. I'll set Pa's son again' a wommin any day."

He bowed profoundly and elaborately to the tall woman, manoeuvring his feet with skill.

"Beg—*hic* (pardon). Beg pardon, mam. Nothing pershonal."

The tall woman looked at his bottom waistcoat button for a minute and then looked back down the canal; and Durkin sighed and disappeared into the bar.

It grew dusky; then the darkness gathered under the stoop-roof. Lights, which had already been lighted in the bar, shone past David and the tall woman, painting their faces with shadow.

The woman drew a deep breath.

"Eanh," said David.

It became quite dark—there were no stars and the canal flowed unseen save for two patches of water running through the light from the windows. Laughter echoed in the bar-room; but on the stoop, the sound of it was dim.

"So she gave you a job, did she?" asked the tall woman.

David drew himself forward on his chair. "Well, I said as how I'd swamped here so long the saloon was as much mine as it was hers."

He paused, but as the woman had nothing to say, he went on: "She didn't give me no answer to that; so I struck her for bed and board and new clothes besides my pay."

"What'd she do?"

"Oh," said David, modestly, and he hitched his new trousers over his knees to ease the crease, "Oh, she took it pretty good."

"I'm surprised," said the tall woman.

"Ain't you goin' in?" asked David, after a while.

"No."

Someone in the bar was singing The Orphan Ballad Singers in a long-drawn, nasal tenor.

"Oh dreary, weary are our feet,  
And weary, dreary is our way;  
Through many a long and crowded street  
We've wandered mournfully to-day.

My little sister, she is pale;  
She is too tender and too young  
To bear the Autumn's sullen gale—  
And all day long the child has sung.

She was our mother's favourite child,  
Who loved her for her eyes so blue.  
She is so delicate and mild,  
She cannot do what I can do.

She never met her father's eyes  
Although they were so like her own,  
In some far distant land he lies,  
A father to his child unknown. . . ."

A sentimental hush fell on the room behind them. The tall woman sighed. Old David hid his face in his hands.

"Say," he said suddenly between his fingers, "you ain't seen my datter on the Erie, has you? She was like that. A little, trembly



gal, with black hair. She sneaked on me and I ain't seen her since."

The tall woman rested her chin on her fist.

"Don't you never hear from her?"

"Yes. Eanh. She writes. Says she's comin' back to take care of me now I'm old and dodder. But she's long coming. You ain't seen her on the Big Ditch, has you?"

"No," said the woman.

Bit by bit the laughter and clatter were resumed in the bar. It had grown damp and a little cooler. The tall woman shivered.

"Better go in," said David.

"I don't want to."

"Why not?"

He wasn't sure of the tall woman's answer, if she made any, for Mrs Silverstone's hearty lifting laughter rang out just then.

David decided to remain with the tall woman. He had made a great impression, he told himself, and he did not want to have it spoiled by being ordered about if he went into the bar.

Goudger came out with another man reeling on his arm.

"Hello, David," they said.

"Hello. 'Lo Bill."

"My namesh Will'am D-durkin," said Goudger's companion with high seriousness. "You're David, if thatsh y-you."

"You're drunk," said David scornfully.

"My shame ish open 'o all men," admitted William collapsing on to a chair. "My glorioush nation! That fancy woman *can* d-drink! My hat'sh off to her."

The boater with the pipe-hat appeared in the door.

"It sure is," he said. "I just saw George putting it in the stove."

"Bye-bye hat," apostrophized William Durkin. "Nev' mind. The woman wash too much for me. I got to believe about her now. But it ain't in nature. She'sh been too much for more men than me. She drinksh with them all."

"That's right," said Goudger. "She does it with all that steps up to her and never turns a hair. Them that's seen her in Bentley's say she'll go on that way all night. She uses her own whiskey. She's got her own partic'lar drink."

"I've seen her in Bentley's," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "And it ain't no lie."

"Jeepersh," said William. "I wish I knowed how she did it."

The tall woman had moved away when Goudger came out. Now she rejoined them. David grinned at her.

"I know," he said to Durkin.

"How?"

"I've drunk her partic'lar drink. I tried it yesterday when she was upstairs getting dressed," he added with an air of importance.

"What wash it?" asked Durkin. "Old Jam-maicy?"

"Cold tea," said David.

"I don't believe it," said Goudger.

"The old man's right," said the tall woman. "I *know*."

"How do you know, Anne?" asked Goudger.

"I worked for her in Utica," said the tall woman. "She got her claws on me when I first come to Utica, and she left her marks on me. My God!"

"I got you through her agency," said Goudger. "What're you kicking about?"

"You're one of the marks, God help you," said the tall woman in a flat voice.

"I think you're a jackass," said Goudger.

He guided William back into the bar.

"So you know her, too?" said the boater in the pipe-hat.

"I got a taste of her this morning," said David. "She thinks she knows the whole damned world."

"She dang near does," said the boater.

"I know her," said the tall woman. "We came from the same part of the state, only she came earlier than I did."

"Thinks she knows the whole damned world," repeated David. "Bossed me round. Bossed me round ragged. . . ."

"She took a fancy to me," went on the tall woman, "because we've got the same name."

"Listen," said the boater with the pipe-hat. "She drinks tea. . . ."

"She's a devil," said the tall woman.

"Listen here, David," said the boater. "You know where them bottles of hers is kept?"

"Eanh. At this end of the bar. They've got the same label as

the three-hundred-per-cent Delta Special Whiskey, and that's right alongside."

"Well," said the boater. "Let's play a joke on her. I'll get some of the boys to keep the 'keep busy and you shift the bottles when he ain't watching. Then I'll drink with her, by Cripus!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the tall woman. "That would be some joke."

"I'll bet that'll take the fancy out of her," said the boater.

David got slowly to his feet.

"Bossed me at swamping, hey? All right."

He and the boater with the pipe-hat went into the bar.

The bar was crammed with men, amazement on their faces, staring, a few even forgetting to drink. Tobacco smoke swayed back and forth to the wind of loud conversation. Lamps, in brackets on the walls, looked dim behind it. The strength of it was stifling.

At the bar the 'keep was hustling. His face was crimson, his brow sweaty; only the deftness of his big hands held him abreast of the demands for more liquor. Slab City was drinking itself under.

At the far end of the room, the fancy woman sat beside a table. Her face beamed and she scattered laughter on all and sundry. The essence of good-humour shone on her cheeks and forehead. She wore a bright yellow dress, cut square at the bosom and very low; and a black ribbon was plaited in her brilliant yellow hair. Her fingers blazed with rings; and about her neck were so many necklaces and locketts that they clinked to her movements.

A teamster was sitting opposite to her, drinking turn about, he with a bottle of whiskey, she with her own bottle slung in a little wicker basket at her waist. The rest looked on over their glasses; she had not declined a drink all evening; and here she was, the most sober in the room. Her attentions were impartial—but they all liked her; and, as the evening progressed, universal opinion pronounced her handsomer.

The teamster got up from the table, unsteadily, holding the back of his chair with fumbling hands. There was a look of disappointment in his face; but he managed a grin in answer to the fancy woman's good-natured laughter.

At the back of the room, the boater with the pipe-hat was holding a conference with Goudger and five or six others. After a minute or two, the group descended on the bar, noisily demanding mixed drinks, until the 'keep's hands flew like a sleight-of-hand artist's. Under cover of their roaring, David slunk behind the bar. He found three bottles of the "mixture" and replaced them with the Delta Special.

Laughing loudly, the others took their seats.

"Work it?" they asked David.

"Easy," he said, his eyes gleaming like a squirrel's.

The boater with the pipe-hat got up and went over to Mrs Silverstone.

"I ain't seen you for a year. You've sure got things fixed up slick."

"Why, it's Mr Greenshawl, ain't it? I'm real glad to see you. You come this way regular?"

"Pretty regular."

"Set down, set down," said the fancy woman. "What'll you have?"

"Delta Special."

"You was always a hard drinker," chuckled the fancy woman. "Joe!" she called the barkeep. "Bring a special for Mr Greenshawl, and some of my mixture."

The barkeep brought them, taking the corks out deftly on the way.

"Here's how," said Greenshawl.

A silence had fallen on the room. Something in the boater's attitude, perhaps, had warned them that something was up. Perhaps it was the sudden stillness of the men who had just been roaring for the 'keep's attention.

"Here's how," echoed the fancy woman, her finger curled as she lifted her glass.

Greenshawl gulped his, and closed his eyes for an instant. When he opened them, he saw Mrs Silverstone's glass as empty as his own.

"Strong likker," he said, shaking his head.

"Yes," said she, "I like it pretty well myself. But I generally stick to my own mixture."

He could not see a flicker on her face. She filled her glass and held it to the light; and her hand was steady. He began to mistrust David.

"Drawing lumber?" asked the fancy woman.

"Eanh," said Greenshawl, putting his pipe-hat under his chair.

"A good haul!" she said, and drank again.

"Good trade for you!" said Greenshawl, and as he drank he rested his elbow on the table.

"He's feeling it a'ready," whispered the man on David's right. "And she's cold sober."

"She's so bung full of tea," said the man on his left, "she's got to get oiled first. Wait for the end of this glass."

They waited. From between them David stared at the fancy woman with a sudden horror.

"You ain't such a quick drinker as you used to be, Greenshawl," she was saying.

He mustered a laugh.

"Getting older," he said.

"That's right," she agreed. "I ain't the hand I used to be, myself. If it wasn't for the mixture I make, I'd have to give it up."

"She's like rock-ballast," said the man on David's right.

David was afraid. The tall woman was standing in the doorway.

"She's commencing to sweat," said the man on his left.

A dull brick red had flooded the fancy woman's cheeks. It grew darker swiftly. But her attitude of self-possession remained unshaken. . . .

Greenshawl groped for his hat and rose unsteadily with the last glass of his bottle held before him.

"Mrs Silverstone," he said shakily, "you're solid! I'll drink to you, and proud to do it."

She got to her feet and grinned. But there was a stiffness in her lips that made it hard for her to speak. And the dark red of her cheeks had flushed her whole face and breast.

"I can take a joke," she said, "as well as the next."

She stood quite steady and raised her right hand to her mouth to blow a kiss, without noticing the empty bottle still clenched in

it. As her hand came opposite her chin, her fingers relaxed and let the bottle smash on the floor. She tottered suddenly and regained her balance with an effort.

Then she fell. For an instant in the dead stillness the tobacco smoke swung lower from the ceiling.

"What in hell?" cried the barkeep running over to her. The others crowded round. The barkeep bent over her. All at once he reached out his hand and laid it on her breast. Nobody said anything. It came upon them that she was dead.

She had fallen backwards with her arms flung up over her head, and her yellow dress caught the light about their feet. She had on red stockings and red-heeled shoes. The swagger was all gone out of her clothes. She looked as if someone had dropped an over-large bouquet of geraniums and marigolds to the floor, where they had been stepped on.

Old David whimpered as he looked at her.

The tall woman came in. She pushed the men aside and stared down at the fancy woman.

"I used to think," she said, "that woman wore a wig."

She squatted down.

"I'm going to find out."

"What the hell?" said the barkeep; but he did not stop her.

The tall woman laid her hand on Mrs Silverstone's hair and pulled gently, and then tugged. Mrs Silverstone's mouth fell open.

"If it wash a wig," said William Durkin, "it would come off."

The tall woman parted the hair with her fingers. It showed black at the roots.

"She dyed it," said the tall woman.

"How did it happen?" asked the barkeep.

"It was a joke, that's all," said Goudger.

"Who done it?"

"David," said two or three. "He shifted the bottles."

The barkeep snarled.

"You dirty little twirk, you've done us out of two soft jobs."

"She oughtn't to run a saloon," whined David, "if she can't drink her own likker."

"You shut up."

"I guess maybe we ought to pick her off the floor," said the barkeep. He and Greenshawl carried her up to her room.

"I'm going to get out of here to-night," exclaimed Goudger. "Anne!"

The tall woman came over to him. She stopped on the porch where David had sat down again. The old man cowered when she spoke.

"She's dead all right."

David moaned.

"You damned fool," said Goudger, "that was a hell of a joke to play on a woman. Why, she might've been your datter for all you know."

He went aboard his boat, lit a lantern, and started getting his team out on the tow-path. He hung the lantern in the bow.

"Lucky I finished loading this lumber Saturday," he growled. "Hurry up, Anne."

The tall woman followed, leaving David bent over his knees on the porch steps. He looked up in time to see the tall woman pass under the lantern light, her profile clearly etched against the planking.

"Take me along, Mr Goudger."

"Hell no," said Goudger.

"I could steer."

"I don't want you along."

The tall woman spoke out of the darkness of the stern.

"Poor old man."

The horses started, and little by little the lantern dwindled.

The men in the saloon trooped out on the stoop. One of them, who had overheard Goudger's remark, taunted David.

"That was some joke of yourn; why it might've been your daughter. She had black hair."

"No, no," cried David.

The barkeep came out.

"It's a funny thing," he remarked. "She come from this part of the state."

"Oh Lord!" whimpered David.

"I just found a paper upstairs," said the 'keep. "Silverstone ain't any name of hers. She was Molly . . ." he held the paper to the light of the window, "Molly Johnson, and she came from hereabouts."

"That lets you out, Dave," said a teamster—with a forced laugh.



"She was a fancy woman," said Greenshawl, taking off his pipe-hat and wiping his forehead.

"She's dead," said another.

David had risen to his feet. His hands jumped and fluttered as he tried to fill his pipe. His face was quite white in the light from the windows.

" 'We come from the same part of the state' . . . 'We've got the same name,' " he repeated the tall woman's words.

"Molly," he said.

He began to sob with the braying noise of a small boy.

The barkeep stared at him with scornful pity.

"Say, you didn't kill your datter. She ain't your datter. What're you crying about?"

"No, no," cried David. "But I seen her."

He started off down the tow-path after Goudger's boat, stooped over, at his slow walk.

"Pore Dave," said the teamster; "he's twirly, but he don't mean harm."

Greenshawl put on his pipe-hat.

"It's a funny thing," he said, dubiously.

## VOLGA

BY ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Your breadth remembers sea, your stately tide  
On which, rare-coached, invisible gods ride  
Remembers it; the winds that beat your waves  
Lightly with old symbolical storm staves  
Remember it; and boatmen whose songs cried  
Remember with their oars old galley slaves.

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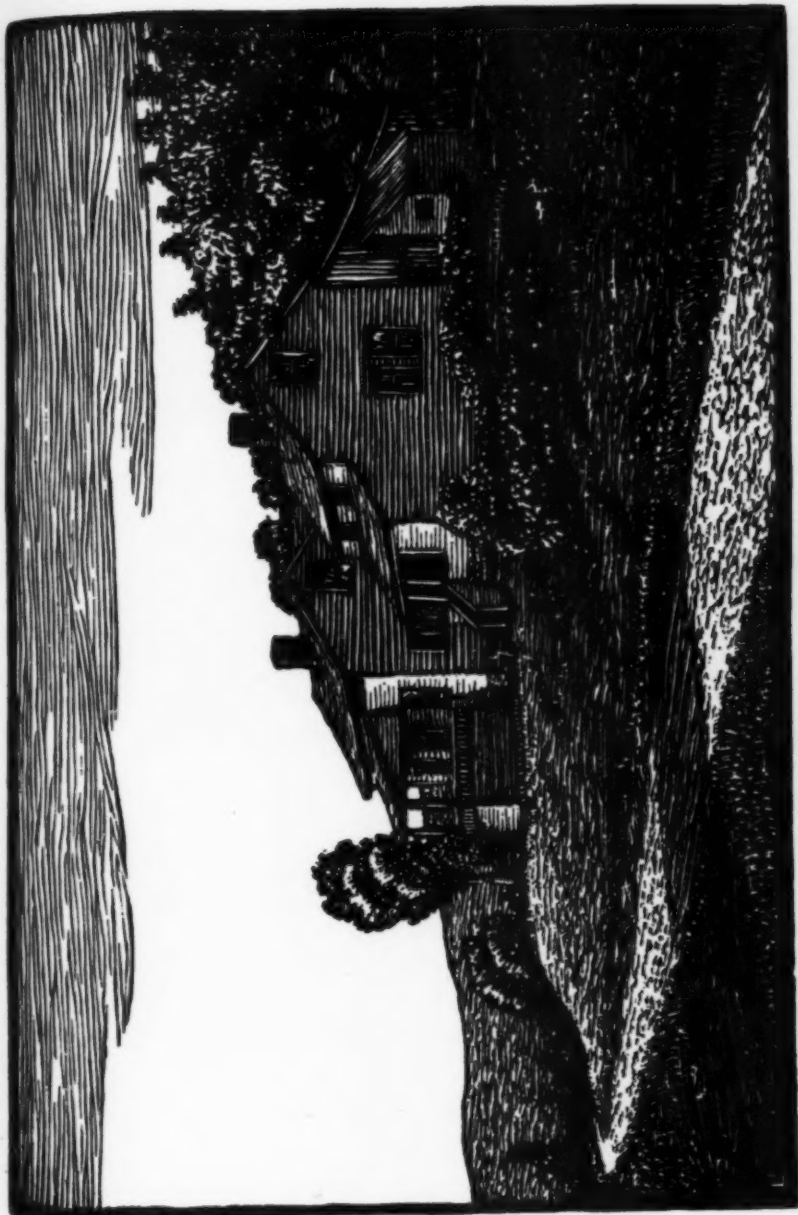
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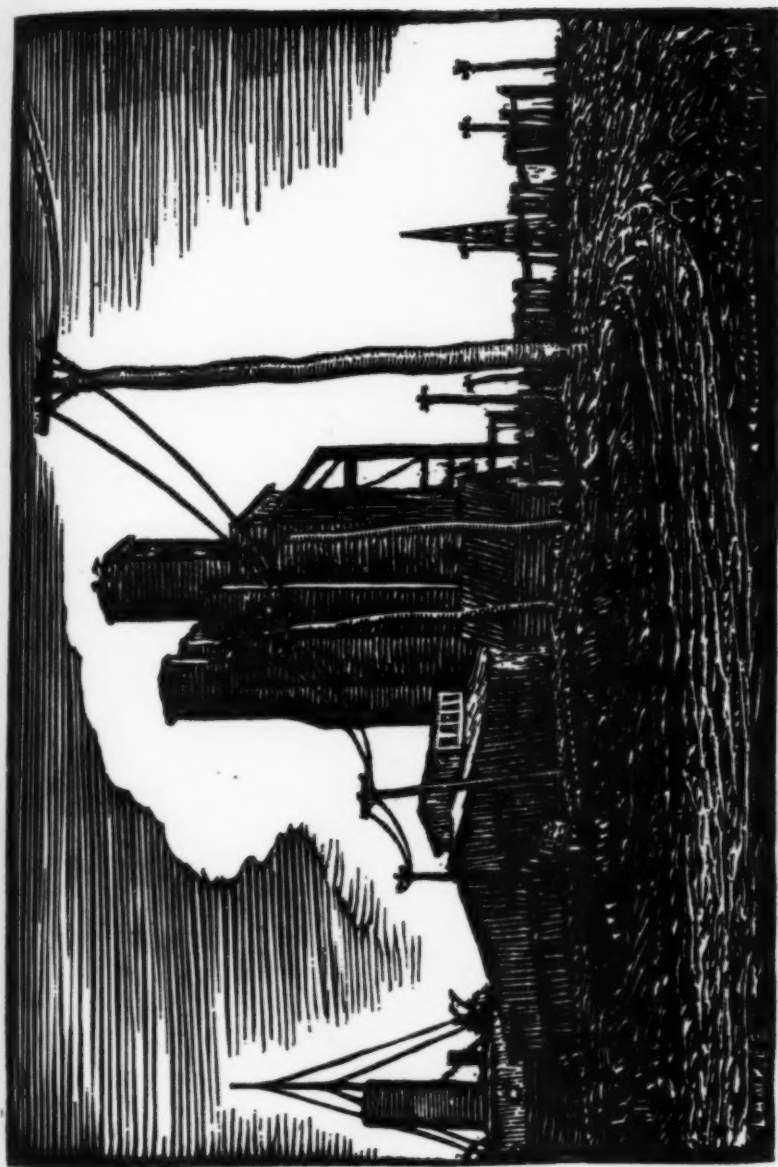
MIKE EVAN'S PLACE. BY J. J. LANKES





IN STEUBEN COUNTY, NEW YORK. BY J. J. LANKES





AN OUTPOST OF COMMERCE. BY J. J. LANKES



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## VISION UNTRADUCED

BY PHILIP LITTELL

IN his preface to *The Renaissance*, with that abundance of commas by dint of which he liked to make slow prose go slower, Pater wrote: "To define beauty, not in the most abstract, but in the most concrete terms possible, to find, not a universal formula for it, but the formula which expresses most adequately this or that special manifestation of it, is the aim of the true student of aesthetics." Mr Roger Fry, one of the "truest" students of aesthetics alive, goes far towards proving that this is not quite so. Though he does not define beauty, does not in fact go in for definitions, there is a sense in which one may say that he pursues both aims, seeks both kinds of formula. The abstracter's interest in discovering the fewest laws that will explain all his aesthetic experience; the enjoyer's interest in keeping each experience separate, in respecting its uniqueness, in doing justice to every shade of difference felt between this pleasure and that—both interests go with Mr Fry wherever either takes him. Each lights up and enriches the other. To realize how unusual this is, and how exceptional it makes Mr Fry's case, one has only to remember the writings of earlier aestheticians, most of whom are disloyal now and then to their own eyes, if they have eyes, so strong is the temptation to ignore or traduce an experience which won't fit in. Quite as exceptional is Mr Fry's tone. Sure of his experience, not at all sure of his explanation, he describes them with the same independence of mind, the same persuasive modesty.

As an aesthetician his hope is "to show certain reasons why we should regard our responses to works of art as distinct from our responses to other situations." Mainly by inspecting his own responses, and by looking for something which is both common and peculiar to them all and not for "any mysterious or specific

NOTE: *Transformations: Critical and Speculative Essays on Art*. By Roger Fry. 4to. 230 pages. Brentano's. \$10. Cf. *THE DIAL*: June 1924, Mr Epstein's Sculpture; November 1925, The Hudson Memorial; December 1925, London Statues; August 1926, The Anatomy of Melancholy; September 1926, Seurat; November 1926, Plastic Colour.

faculty," he discovers "that in all these cases our reaction to works of art is a reaction to a relation and not to sensations or objects or persons or events. This," he adds, "forms a distinguishing mark of what I call aesthetic experiences, aesthetic reactions, or aesthetic states of mind." And "however necessary a responsive sensualism may be for an appreciation of aesthetic wholes," an act of aesthetic apprehension does not imply attention to the sensations themselves, but does imply "an attentive passivity to the effects of sensations apprehended in their relations." Within the field of Mr Fry's present enquiry the relations to be apprehended are always between those volumes which the plastic arts aim to create. Thus his theory—not an apt word, but let me use it for short—enables Mr Fry to make convenient distinctions. Looking for the first time at something meant to be a work of art he can tell whether it is or it isn't: "If I examine my own sensations and emotions I am bound to confess that they seem to me to be of quite a different nature when I look at good sculpture from what I feel in front of Mr Epstein's bronzes." One might ask at this point how many earlier experiences a critic had better lay in before he can profitably hunt for their common-and-peculiar element and can treat it when found as a test for any later experience. How does he know when to begin his analysis? But these questions are, except formally, vain. Any aesthetic theory, if you press it as hard as that, dries up. It turns into a concept whose line of communication with experience has been cut.

The test of any aesthetic theory, as all of us have nowadays agreed to say, and some of us to think, is not whether it is flawless logically, but whether it works. Mr Fry's is not something he believes while sitting and theorizing and neglects when looking at a painting, a drawing, a bust, a relief, a vase. To say that a man's Aesthetic is always with him, that each of his experiences implies it, that it is always quick with vision, cannot ever, I imagine, be quite true. It is nearly true of Mr Fry. He is so happily organized that neither his Aesthetic nor his familiarity with the history of art ever forgets that its office is to help him to see. Everything helps him to see.

Only by reading *Transformations* through can one gain an adequate notion of Mr Fry's independence, alertness, variety, geniality, acuteness. Something may be done, however, by a few

quotations. We all know how easily one gets remote from appearance in the act of describing it technically. From Mr Fry's essay *On Some Modern Drawings* I take this example of technical exposition:

"But to the pure visualist, or Impressionist, as we may conveniently call him, drawing presents, as compared with painting, a peculiar difficulty. The drawn line does not directly record any visual experience. It describes a contour, and that contour is presented to the eye as the boundary of one area of tone seen against another area of different tone and colour, and throughout its length there will be continued slight variations in this contrast. In drawing this sensational datum is, as it were, summarised and symbolised by a line which contrasts equally with the white paper on either side of its thickness. We have to accept this as a kind of summation of all the infinite number of points at which the sensation of one coloured area ends and another coloured area begins. Supposing these two areas are formed by a flat piece of paper lying on a flat table, this summation of the points is fairly adequate and the outline represents well enough the sensation. But in the majority of cases the boundary of one area in contrast to another represents for us the limit of one convex volume against a remoter and perhaps concave area. In such a case each point of the contour becomes the section of a line which is passing away from the eye at right angles to the plane of the paper, and from the point of view of the evocation of the plastic relief of the volume it is the fact of its disappearance that is important. And herein lies the chief problem and difficulty of the art of drawing."

That, for all its intricacy, stays close to the sources of sight. Contrast its technicalness with the charming humour of his praise—in *Book Illustration* and a *Modern Example*—of Mr McKnight Kauffer's illustrations to Burton's *Anatomy*, or with his remark that "we may give to Caravaggio the honour of having been the first purely popular artist, the real founder of the Royal Academy, the Salon, and almost the whole art of the cinema." The essay on *Culture and Snobbism* begins thus: "It is a nice point, and one on which I have never yet been able to make up my mind, whether culture is more inimical to art than barbarism, or *vice versa*." Of

reverence Mr Fry says that it "is, of course, as inimical to true aesthetic experience as it is to the apprehension of truth." The nearest he gets to reverence, in this sense, and without getting very near it, is when he writes of M Rouault or of M André Rouveyre's caricatures. But the usual accompaniments of irreverence are not at all in his line. That is one reason why his essay on Sargent, so cordial, so friendly, is a little masterpiece of genial destructiveness.

Of course we expect to come across, in a book so rich in responses to so many stimuli, a few things not easy to reconcile with Mr Fry's Aesthetic. "One would prefer," he says of Mr Epstein, "to live with something less vehement in attack, rather more persuasive. But this is a question of taste and perhaps of individual temperament." Unless an aesthete believes, as Mr Fry deliberately does not, that every aesthetic question is a question of taste, a reader always wonders, when the phrase is used, what other question is begged. Here, at a guess, the other question is as to the place of aesthetic responses in the hierarchy of responses. One day while the war was still going on, Sir Maurice Amos, who had come to this country to discuss Priority, talked about this hierarchy. Somebody's theory of truth, Mr Bertrand Russell's perhaps, had been mentioned, and Sir Maurice said something more or less like this: "At one end of the scale is arithmetic. You say five times five is twenty-five. I say it is twenty-six. You are right. I am wrong. At the other end of the scale is—well, take nausea. We both go to sea. I am seasick, you are not. But it cannot be said that you are right, and that I am wrong. Neither reply to the motion of the ship is correct or incorrect." It would be interesting to know towards which end of this scale Mr Roger Fry would put aesthetic experiences, and how near. If we knew this we should perhaps know why once in a while, a long while, he isolates some one aesthetic question and calls it a question of taste. And we might, if luck were with us, be on our way towards an answer to an older question: How do we know that the good judges are better judges than the bad judges?

## SLEEPING BY THE SEA

BY HAROLD MONRO

The tall old waves seethe onward to the beach,  
With dismal loud explosion boom and fall;  
(Their reckless parent wind that follows each  
Now nourishes them high, now starves them small).  
They range like warriors battering a wall,  
Who flood, invincible, gigantic, slow  
Until their rising tide at length will reach  
To their doomed town's indubitable fall.

But they are only furrows on the sea.  
I, anxious bedded listener, stare and ask.  
The generations climb Eternity;  
The waves deceive the shore: each wears a mask,  
And each complacently fulfils a task.

The waves burst their cracked water. Their long blow  
Furrows my anxious brain as I lie here.  
They seem to drench me with their overflow;  
But we are cousins, for we are so near  
That I might well ignore them: yet I fear.  
Their threat is so terrific through their sound,  
I shrink to earth; I burrow into ground.

## THE GIFT OF THE FIRST PRESENTATION

BY KWEI CHEN

IT was soon after breakfast. Stealthily I made my way out to the garden house. There I folded back my sleeve-muffs; I shook off my felt-soled shoes, held only by the toe-covering, tugged at the cotton socks, and rolled up the long trouser legs from my now bare ankles. I dug my toes into the warming earth, just to try them—for it was spring and the saps were running.

"This morning I must complete my dam. Perhaps I shall find fish this very afternoon!" This I said to myself, imagining the speckled silver-green bodies—lithe and lacy like the scurry of finny Foam Flower on the painted roll in my father's collection . . . perhaps, he would hang the lovely Foam Flower picture to-day, for with us that is suitable to the walls which is seasonable to the year!

At the edge of our garden flowed a tiny streamlet, beyond which extended the bamboo forest. To this I walked, and stood for a while, hesitating. Should I indeed work on my dam this fine morning? Or dig bamboo shoots? There were so many enticing occupations! Springtimes not a single soul in our village is not working. The men are in the rice-fields. The women are spinning and weaving, and their clean, shrill voices penetrate the lattices screening them from the eye. Not even the children are at leisure. If you do not hear them from the schoolhouses, shouting out their lessons, you will see them cow-back, blowing famously at their bamboo flutes, or barefoot like myself busily at work on dams for the village brooks.

I decided to postpone bamboo-shoot digging to another day. Somehow I felt that I should finish the work which I had begun. Besides, Mother had told me often enough never to leave one work unfinished in order to start another. Then, too, we might expect rain at any hour—for it was spring—and after the rains come sudden floods, swelling the village brooks into swift little rivers. The speckled Foam Flower travel upstream at this season, upstream with the flood. So, if one have a cunning dam prepared, with the retreat of the flood they are caught in the pool it creates. I set to work at once, to complete my dam.



Alone I worked, with diligence and hopefulness. The morning sun of the late springtime was all loveliness. The water was a little chilly, but only soothingly chilly. And it was so fresh and clear! No sooner had I roiled it with the mud of the dam-making than it became clear once more, all of its own flow. This gave an added joy to my work. I liked to see the incessant coming of the clear water, driving away the muddied water. . . .

"Ching-yü, Ching-yü!"

I heard my name called, and, a little frightened, I turned. It might be Mother, who had warned me to stay away from the stream. This was because the Astrologer had carefully cautioned her to keep me far from the evil influence of the Water-Star and all that was within his influence. For my part, I should tell the Astrologer to mind his own stars, and sing to his *hu-ching*! To my mind Astrologers know little enough either of stars or music!

But it was only my grandmother's nurse.

"Oh, here you are! Get out of the water quickly! I won't tell your mother this time—but I shall if ever I find you there again. . . . Your mother wants you at once. Two very dear and honourable guests have come."

"Who are they? And why do guests always wish to see me?" I am irritated. I do not like to have my work interrupted. It might rain this very night, and my pool become an underwater garden, filled with Foam Flower.

"They are from a distance. You'll learn to know them. Come on now and change your clothes."

"Ching-yü," says my mother when I have made my appearance in the parlour—now with my handsomest flowered robe and jacket and silk-topped shoes—"koto to Third Aunt."

"So this is Ching-yü," observes the guest. "How well he knows polite manners." She turns to me: "You are in school, I suppose?"

I shake my head, embarrassed, but my mother answers for me, apologetically:

"I have not felt like sending him away with his brothers. At present I devote whatever leisure I have to teaching him. And you know that he has been adopted by the Merciful Goddess."

I was standing beside my mother, motionless and with bowed



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head. I was not at all interested in her conversation with Third Aunt. There was another guest, who also was in the room. My heart was throbbing.

I could see only her dress—white linen printed with green bamboo leaf design. She was seated sedately, with her hands folded in her lap, and I could see her hands, little delicate hands adorned with lovely bracelets of jade as translucently green as the bodies of my admired Foam Flower in the clear water. She was seated close beside her mother, and I ventured—shielded from observation by the conversational interest of my elders—to take a brief, surreptitious glance at her face. Beautiful! beyond poets' words beautiful! My cheeks, my ears, my neck—I could feel them hot and red. I knew that I had been impolite, yet I did not wish to leave the place; I should have been content to stay if but for the hope of another vision of the cocoon-smooth hair and the bright black eyes and the lotus-petal cheeks of her! Once again I tried to look up—but manners had conquered courage, and I dared go no further than her shoulder, and the smooth curve beneath her chin. There, around her neck, was a silver ring, and suspended from it a pendant inscribed with the two characters which pray "Long Life" for their wearer. I was delighted. For I had had a neck-ring of the same kind. It was now two years since I had ceased to wear it. People regarded it as unbecoming for a boy to wear a neck-ring after he had passed his eighth birthday. Girls, of course, might continue with theirs until the age of ten. Nevertheless, I wished that I might show her my ring, and that I might closely examine hers. If we could only compare them intimately, she and I. . . . But I knew that this was impossible.

For the moment I was sunk in sadness. If I were but a girl! or she a boy cousin and not a girl cousin! It did not occur to me to rebel against the established code of a Confucian family, but I was conscious, and keenly conscious, of suffering from this ancient and honoured law of familiar deportment. Right though it might be, it was depriving me of a playmate for whom I longed . . . parlours and conversations and sittings-in-chairs were all well enough for grown people; they seemed to enjoy them . . . but for us, the two of us, my lovely cousin and my longing self . . . why, there might be Foam Flower in the pool even now! The thought was maddening, and no doubt I appeared to be tired and awkward;

and when I heard my mother say: "You are excused, Ching-yü," I hurried away from the parlour.

Directly I went to my bedroom. I took from its red leather box my silver neck-ring, and examined it attentively to see if it really closely resembled the one worn by my girl cousin. Yes, there was no mistaking! They were verily mates! I was elated, for here at least was a symbol of kinship, and I felt as if I knew my lovely cousin as well as if hours of playtime had been passed together. I remembered, too, that the ring had been given me by Second Aunt, now five years gone. It was on the day that I had been given in Sonship to beautiful Kwan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy. I had been a sickly child, and my mother had prayed to the goddess, and had named me in her presence, and had asked for me her mothering protection and fostering care. Perhaps my cousin also had been devoted to Kwan Yin? Perhaps we were both children of the Divine Mother? Surely, it was Second Aunt who had given both rings, and surely it was for the one reason, and surely we were for each other. . . . After some minutes of close examination, I replaced the ring in its red leather box.

I went to the kitchen and asked the cook for two eggs.

"What for?" she questioned.

"To make fire-fly lanterns," I answered.

"Oh ho!" she jested, "I know! I know!"

"What do you know? You know nothing!"

I was provoked, fearing she had discerned my secret. The whole world was too small for me! I could have nothing that I desired. Even the cook had the right to interfere in my affairs!

I left the kitchen with the eggs, but I could not but overhear the cook's laugh, as she joked with the kitchen-maid: "Fire-fly lanterns! For younger cousin Yu Lian!"

Delightful! At least, I had learned my girl cousin's name! This knowledge added immense richness to my idealization of her.

"Yu Lian!" I muted the name with pleasantness, thinking all the while of its meaning. "Yu Lian! What name can better suit her sweet form? Lotus of Jade! But she is far more lovely than even her name signifies . . . more lovely, yes, more lovely than the jade-green Foam Flower in the clear pool!"

The whole house was upset for the celebration of the arrival of

our rare and dear and honourable guests. All conversation, all thinking, all work was concerned with them, and only them. My two elder sisters were recalled from their school in the rear apartment. One of them took the place of Mother as mistress of the household, so that my mother could give herself wholly to the entertainment of my aunt. The other was appointed hostess of our Younger Cousin, and the two were speedily at play. As for me, I was carefully instructed not to go near them. "Go see our teacher in the rear apartment," First Elder Sister suggested. Then all left me.

The banquet of welcome was in preparation. Our best china was brought forth—china which commanded high respect in our house, for it was a portion of Mother's dowry, and had been given her by her Fourth Uncle who had obtained it while he was Imperial Examiner of the Province of Kiangsi, and it is in Kiangsi that the finest china of the Middle Kingdom is produced. Then Laurel Blossom Tea was brewed. Laurel blossoms are the annual product of the two laurel-trees in our garden, but the tea-leaves came from far-away Hangchow. Of course, the ivory chopsticks also appeared. They are for all rare occasions.

But in all the excitement I was left unheeded. The servants were whispering, but when I approached they ceased at once, and smiled at one another knowingly. This irritated me. I hid myself in my bedroom. I did not wish to see any one. It was then that I accidentally discovered that something had been left, quite in plain sight, since I had come to examine my neck-ring and see if it truly were a mate for the "Long Life" at the neck of my lovely Younger Cousin. There it was, a packet in bright paper, with my name clearly written upon it. I picked it up, and carefully untied the golden thread and folded out the scarlet wrappings. There within was the Gift of the First Presentation. First, an ink-grinder of chrysanthemum stone, and the case within which it was set was of palisander wood beautifully carved with the nebulous curves of the Cloud Pattern, and second there was a *cloisonné* ink-holder, blue with the Heron-and-Lotus design which means that its owner shall be a sage fisher after wise thoughts in the pool bright with the Flower of the Good Man. For ours had always been a family proud of its scholars and poets. I knew very well that these treasures were from Third Aunt. I had been

shown into her presence for the first time, and here were her Good Fortune greetings to me.

"Ching-yü!" A familar voice came from behind me. I turned to see my chum Hwa-yuan. "Can you guess why your aunt is paying her visit to your mother?"

"Why is it?" I asked indifferently. "I don't know."

"It is a secret. I won't tell you. I am not expected to tell any one." His manner was that of a merchant of precious goods, which, as a matter of fact, he would sell most cheaply. I was, therefore, not discouraged.

"A secret! Come, tell me! I have always told you what I have heard. Come, tell! Please!"

"Well, you must not disclose that you have learned it from me. And you must not blush."

"What is it? I won't do anything of that sort, you may be sure. The Thunder God blow me if I do!" I began to be impatient.

"It is about yourself," he said in a low voice. "Have you seen your *dear* Cousin Yu Lian? It is about her, too." He took on a jesting manner: "O child! I heard my sisters say that she is the prettiest girl in the world! She used to go to the new school, and was the best student of all! Her calligraphy is even superior to that of your Second Elder-Brother. What luck! O child! . . . But I must be going. Elder-Sister sent me to borrow some brush-case patterns for embroidery. She is waiting."

I had been embarrassed while Hwa-yuan was talking. Now that he was gone I rejoiced. I felt that I should blush to see any one in the house. I wished to be alone. So I pretended to be reading a book, there in my bedroom.

Supper was over. Day embraced Night. Frogs began their Hastening-the-Farmers-to-Work song, which is always theirs when spring breaks and the rice-fields call for labour. The moon was yet behind the Eastern Hill. But the fire-flies were already abroad, wandering, wandering, and flecking the dusk with their momentary glows.

Equipped with a bulrush fan, I went out to the Drying-Rice Field, and there I caught many fire-flies. One by one I put them into the shells of the two eggs, from which the original contents

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had been drained through a tiny hole. With my take of flies I return to my room. There, carefully, I hang the fragile fire-fly cages by silken threads, each to an ivory curtain-hook of my bed. Within their narrowed universes the fire-flies show their glories. They are perfect little lanterns. In my heart I dedicate one of them to my Younger Cousin Yu Lian. "Lotus of Jade," I think. "How lovely is her name!" Rejoicing, I look out into the dusk. I can hear faintly the trickle and tinkle of the stream that courses at the foot of the bamboo grove. There is a pool there for the Foam Flower, and some day—how soon!—we two shall be watching the lacy fins in the clear waters. . . .

The Moon looks in through the window. He has just peeped over the Eastern Hill. I am inspired! And down I kneel with the Gift of the First Presentation upheld with both hands.

"Good Old Man, Moon," I cry. "Be kind to us on this Earth! It is you who can see true hearts of true lovers! Through you they become happy! O Wise-man Moon! If you see that my heart and the heart of my Heart's Man are true, do spin for us a red silken thread, to bind our feet together, that we may love for ever! Every day I will burn incense, every day I will kotow to you, every day while I live! Be kind to us on Earth!"

I kotowed many times before I arose.

I was in the Flowery Land. There I saw Younger Cousin Yu Lian, at a little distance. She was reaching up her lily hand—still wearing the jade-green bracelet—about to tie a poem to a branch of blossoming peach-tree. The poem was very beautiful; it was written in the most exquisite calligraphy. In my heart I knew that it must be a love-poem. . . .

Boldly I advanced my steps. Her name . . . "Lotus of Jade" . . . it was all but spoken. . . . But when I came to the place where she had been . . .

It is only in their own world, within the water, that the Foam Flower are truly beautiful. . . . Their life is there. . . .

"Ching-yü, Ching-yü!"

It was my mother's voice. I rubbed my eyes as the morning sun looked in upon me.



A DRAWING. BY HILDEGARDE WATSON





### THREE POEMS

BY DON LOCHBILER

#### DAM

This water arches  
blades of grass like  
frosted October bullrushes, its  
colour is the colour of an April plum  
and of olives  
wet  
under spoons of cracked ice  
and on cut glass,  
stones warp it, twigs  
dandelion pinfeathers  
foam spools and grass boats  
boil in the vortices,  
the gills of minnows  
are holes flaked with silver in it.

#### DELANCEY STREET OVERTURE

this glass, these claws of crystal shafts  
now broken in an earthy urn, parting  
under the metal paths of wind, tasselled  
and slender on the twining leash each ray  
each stalk confining endless sheaves  
before the tangled strokes and shreds  
of wind in grass

and dust of spiral staves  
in curving legs confusing wire of twigs  
hollow and glass of tracking eyed  
and grey familiar flies and sharpened fins  
of gleaming path and wing

## THREE POEMS

## THE HEAD

One year I poked a coney from a hedge  
With a dry stick without a point or blade  
But bent, and blunted at the tip with age,  
And caught a rabbit in a knitted snare  
And hanged him by a cord, pierced through the ear.

Have, in the winter, turned my fingers chill  
To stopping the wind's gullet with a shell,  
Bringing its horn to cover a hole's shrill  
Tongue, or knotted them into a fist  
And broken scale grown on a staked pond's crest.

And other fingers with a natural craft  
I have, that cradle thickets with a deft  
Caress, and straddle river's glassy shaft  
As stone and stone are straddled by an arch  
Or leg of gloving light, or waters stretch

In winging ball, with tail and bowl like pear  
Fat-bellied on the trigger stem, and tear  
Of mist on twig and flat of leaf, that share  
Honey of trees, between cloud tendril-shaped  
And fin-pocked stream, below leaves' shadow kept.

And I have thought the fingers in their pride  
Of craft superior to hair of head  
That wires a futile gold, or eye allied  
To idly glowing gem that shapes the light  
Of breaking star to fit its own small fret:

Eye by no twist discerns the inner flesh  
Nor does its glass net any moment flash  
Or gleaming scale within the head's wrapped mesh;  
And golden hair when parted from the tress  
Becomes a little filament of brass.

But once, by wine or by fatigue betrayed,  
My fingers at limbs' ends lay on a bed  
Unfeeling, while wind twisted into braid  
Head's hair, and water fallen as hail  
Rattled on glass, and in ear's hollow bell.

And skirting round me, like a circling ball  
I felt the tightening pressure of a skull—  
Between me and the braided hair a wall  
Of curving bone; a bone in solid arc  
Above where lip and tongue on pivot work.

Like fissure cracked in stone by crystal grit  
A cleft split open by my rage's weight.  
I saw within the cleft a shallow pit  
Whose darkness quivered, as a slender film  
Of darkness quivers in a core of flame.

And while I looked, the water fallen as hail  
Rattled on glass, and wind blew. On the ground  
One tree dropped leaves that sheltered from the cold  
And hail a single bird. With upraised head  
The bird gasped at the wind, but made no sound.

## A GRAVE IN DORSET

BY LLEWELYN POWYS

**T**HERE before us, extended in all their noonday majesty, rose the great headlands of the Dorset coast, Bat's Head, Swyre Head, Hamboro Tout, lying one behind the other even as far as where the misty upland lawns of St Aldhelm's Head stretched out into the channel. All was mute. As far as eye could scan no movement was visible on the flanks of those wild hills. Unresponsive, unmoved, their monstrous furze-covered slopes confronted our frightened eyes. Spurred forward by our anxiety we climbed each of the great hills which as they approach the sea break into clear, chalk cliffs, blank and perpendicular. From an altitude of five hundred feet our eyes traced the musical curves of the deserted beaches below, and then, in what seemed but a moment of time, we were ourselves moving forward over those bright seabanks of shingle. Under the smugglers' chain we discovered the indentations of footsteps. It was high tide. Could it be that during the interval that had passed since he entered the sea the encroaching water had carried away his clothes?

Back we went. By the time we had reached the second burial mound the sun was sinking towards Hardy's monument in the west. Already the cormorants with black necks outstretched were with swift deliberation flying round the White Nose to their nesting places. Could not He who taught these birds their natural unforgetful knowledge lighten our darkness also? With weary tread we made our way to the fisherman who lives in his thatched cottage two miles westward from the White Nose and asked him to row his boat along under those promontories already in the on-coming darkness proffering the night-time pallor of their faces to the sea. We watched the small craft till it was out of sight, but two hours later it returned; its labour had been in vain.

Then darkness gathered over the hills and stretched herself in the hollows of the valleys and the stars came out and the little owl settling on the post where the rusty barbed-wire ends called to its mate. We entered our empty house. Surely, we thought,

he might even yet come back, come home as a lost cat comes home beyond all expectation. We entered his room. All his worldly possessions remained in their places in the same meticulous order as he had left them.

At that time of the year the glow of twilight is so soon replaced by the first wanness of the morning that the small hours of our midnight watch, with the door of our kitchen left ajar, were soon past. Once again we were out on the headlands overlooking a sea, white and colourless as a hempen shroud. It was then in the stillness of that hour before dawn that we saw a most uncommon thing. Away to the right where the under-cliff, overgrown with privet and wind-bent elder-trees, breaks down to the beach there appeared against some protruding chalk rocks two animals following one behind the other—badgers returning to their earth! No sight could have brought more sharply to our tormented minds the indifference, the unconcern of the natural world to our trouble. Our brows were bathed by cool sea-weed-smelling airs and on all sides we knew there was taking place unarrested the development of new life. Doe-rabbits in a thousand darkened tunnels were bringing to birth, were nurturing their blind and naked offspring; in a hundred snug "forms" hares were suckling their leverets; the young ravens in their nest on the samphire-grown ledges of the Durdle-door were calling to their dark mother for meat. Already the peregrine falcon had killed its prey, already the sly, sturdy adder had emerged from its retreat to an open place where the sun could warm its compact scales. On all sides the tireless urge of life was manifesting itself. This morning, so intense to us, by others was judged as ordinary.

Again we watched the fisherman navigating his boat over the water. He approached West Bottom. He disappeared behind the Fountain Rock. Why did he delay so long in the sheltered water under the four-square single pillar of chalk, taller and more massive than any that ever supported Acropolis or Cathedral? Had he found the one for whom we were looking, the one we loved, down there in that pool that could only be reached by sea? We waited. Still we waited. Would the boat never come into sight again? I knew the transparent pool well with its weed-covered rocks. In the storms of winter no place along the coast was capable of presenting an aspect more formidable. At such a time it seemed

a haven forgotten, abandoned to its own deserted and desolate fury. In summer weather all this was changed. It was here that the foolish guillemots gathered to nest, becking at each other in lofty crevices or fluttering out to sea, in circles, only to return with legs astraddle to their stained platforms.

Out into the open the boat once more came. Surely it was manned by two now, where before there had been but one. And why was the face of this other white as chalk? Far distant as I was, the dead head of our friend was clearly visible. With unshriven spirits we hurried down the precipitous path to where we knew the boat could come into shore. This then was the hearse of our wanderer, this his carriage of death. The broad oars creaked in their rowlocks; the unbailed water at the bottom of the boat washed to and fro with the gentle heaving of the sea, and there in the stern he lay, a steersman who had no need of a tiller. Though he had fallen from the top of the cliff his beauty remained unmarred. In death as in life his lips still wore their expression of unoffending pride, of unapproachable chastity. His grey flannel trousers were torn as those of a boy's might be torn who had fallen on a hard road. Through the rent a white knee-cap protruded, familiar and reassuring in shape and appearance. We touched it. We clasped his hand, that hand whose aristocratic fingers were trailing in the water. Was this then the hand, this unliving, pale hand from which all blood had been withdrawn, that had broken bread, cast stones, wielded axes, and caressed the soft cheeks of those sad, bereft ones who had so loved him? Could he not speak to us, tell us what had happened, blame his slippery shoes, explain that *he was only looking over* when that ill-omened boulder gave way hurling him to a violent death? Alas, the death-parting had been made and never again would we hear his protesting laugh, never again be taught gentleness by his unassuming ways.

As we climbed back up the path the memory of him blinded us. All that had happened during the past few hours came back to our memory; we recalled the sensitive, almost guilty look he had worn when we came upon him suddenly outside Judge Jeffrey's house in Dorchester and he thought he had kept us waiting; remembered the consideration he had shown to us, his self-effacement, his solitary humour. "I have three hours," he had said. Could one of those premonitions felt, so it is rumoured, by those about to

die, have prompted him to speak thus plainly? His watch was stopped at a quarter to one o'clock and from where he fell he was exactly fifteen minutes from our cottage on the White Nose. He fell a little to the east of the Fountain Rock, near a fox's hole, near where a clump of elder-trees grow. And what a monument Fate had prepared for him! Here, indeed, was a cenotaph! With bowed heads we stood by the side of that mighty bastion ribbed with flint. If the neck of the one we loved was to be broken it was well that it should be done here where the jack-daws like damned souls glide with the swiftness of javelins, better far here, in one single moment of desperate consciousness, where the herring gulls never cease from crying, better, in such a place, and at such an hour, than in the gambling dens of New York, for there was not one of us, not one of his friends and lovers, who did not feel assured in their hearts that no old man's grave was to be his.

Seldom does a priest cross the threshold of my door, but, as chance would have it now, my cousin from over the seas stood knocking, as the young men who carried our dead opened our garden gate. How welcome in our house of mourning was the beloved monk bringing with him all the consolation that the ancient pieties could give. With eyes that saw not, with ears that heard not, with lips that uttered no word, the young man lay before us in all his august dignity. I tried to stamp for ever upon my mind the beauty of that proud, fallen head.

Three days later we followed the farm wagon which carried his coffin, down to the churchyard of East Chaldon. Along grassy tracks by the edge of cornfields and down through wide, silent valleys, where the horse's hooves were muffled by the soft turf, our way lay, the way of the dead man, and a handful of mourners and four bearers hired from the village. The weather was still gracious. The sun splashed down upon the shadowless slopes and upon the field of mustard that bordered the lane. Immediately before me there trod an aged labourer in a black coat, in a coat black as the feathered back of a crow. From what cupboard had it been taken to do honour to this stranger from a far land, this old coat, with pockets cut after the eighteenth-century manner? With a smell of dusty horse dung rising from the road I looked at the neck of this old man, so deeply wrinkled with "nought and crosses" wrinkles, and thought of his father and his father's father, who had all



probably worn this same black braided garment on a hundred such occasions. Wherever a man lives there also is grief. I continued to follow the elm-wood coffin almost hidden under its burden of ladies-smocks, blue-bells, buttercups, pink campions, and "rank fumiter."

Up the path and into the church we carried him, into that village church which still contained within its walls a font cut out of a massive block of stone by Saxon masons, more than a thousand years ago. In such a place the words of the poet could not fall on the ears of the congregation without understanding. "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday; seeing that is past as a watch in the night. Thou turnest man to destruction; again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. As soon as thou scatterest them, they are even as a sleep: and fade away suddenly like the grass."

## ON EGDON HEATH

BY LOUISE MOULTON

Lonely you think my walk—  
Lonely? But no!  
For in my buttonhole a stalk,  
A stiff, sweet stalk  
Of Jerusalem sage  
Plucked in the garden where that other sage,  
Our Thomas Hardy, dawned upon this age.  
Though far upon the windy heath  
Alone I go,  
I am not lonely—no,  
With that old thatched house beneath,  
Rose-wrapped at the corner of the heath,  
And in my buttonhole a stalk,  
A stiff, sweet stalk  
Of sage.

## MEDIAEVALISM AND MEDIAEVALISM

(*Guido Cavalcanti*)

BY EZRA POUND

THE following pages are extracted from explanatory matter in a critical edition of Guido Cavalcanti, and while I set no very high value on descriptive criticism or on explanation considered apart from the thing explained, it seems to me that some of my conclusions may have a certain interest, or that considering the present lack of dissociation of mediaeval values in the general mind, I may be justified in giving them a wider circulation than they would have in a volume, necessarily expensive and likely, in our unfortunate state of society, to go chiefly to specialists.

### I

Safe may'st thou go, my canzon, whither thee pleaseth  
Thou art so fair attired,

Apart from the welcome given to, or withheld from a fine performance it seems to me that the vogue of Guido's *canzone*, Donna mi Prega, was due to causes not instantly apparent to the modern reader. I mean that it shows traces of a tone of thought no longer considered dangerous, but that may have appeared about as soothing to the florentine of A.D. 1290 as conversation about Tom Paine, Marx, Lenin, and Bucharin would be to-day in a methodist Bankers' board meeting in Memphis, Tenn.

The teaching of Aristotle had been banned in the University of Paris in 1213. This prejudice had been worn down during the century, but Guido shows, I think, no regard for any one's prejudice, we may trace his ideas to Averroes, Avicenna, he does not definitely proclaim any heresy, but he shows leanings, toward not only the proof by reason, but toward the proof by experiment. I do not think that he swallowed Aquinas. It wd. be impossible to prove that he had heard of Roger Bacon, but the whole *canzone* is easier to understand if we suppose, or at least, one finds a con-

siderable interest in the speculation, that he had read Grosseteste on the Generation of Light.

In all of which he shows himself much more "modern" than his young friend Dante Alighieri, *qui était diablement dans les idées reçues*, and whose shock is probably recorded in the passage of *Inferno X* where he finds Guido's father and father-in-law paying for their mental exertions. In general one may conclude that the conversation in the Cavalcanti-Uberti family was more stimulating than that in Tuscan bourgeois and ecclesiastical circles of the period.

It is open to me to accompany these notes with a text and translation of the *canzone*, but as my conclusions are based on the whole text of Guido, or at least the serious part of that text, excluding rhymed letters, skits, and simple pastorals, and as the *canzone* by itself does not conclusively prove my assertions it seems better to let them stand as simple opinion rather than to give half a proof, especially as some part of one's opinion depends on imponderabilia or on details that can only weigh with someone who has more than casual interest and is ready to make close examination of the data for himself.

## II

The mediaeval poets brought into poetry something which had not existed in Greece or Rome. The Tuscan poets, Guido in particular, brought into poetry something which had not been or not been in any so marked and developed degree in the poetry of the troubadours. It is still more important for any one wishing to have well balanced critical appreciation of poetry in general, to understand that this quality, or this assertion of value, has not been in poetry *since*; and that the English "philosophical" and other "philosophical" poets have not produced a comparable *Ersatz*.

The greek aesthetic would seem to consist wholly in plastic, or in plastic moving toward coitus, and limited by incest, which is the sole greek taboo. This new thing in mediaeval work that concerns us, has nothing to do with Christianity which people both praise and blame for utterly irrelevant and unhistorical reasons. Erotic sentimentality we can find in greek and roman poets, and one may observe that the main trend of Provençal and Tuscan poets is not toward erotic sentimentality.

BUT THEY AREN'T PAGANS, they are called pagans, and the troubadours are also accused of being manicheans, obviously because of a muddle somewhere. They are opposed to a form of stupidity not limited to Europe, that is, idiotic asceticism and a belief that the body is evil. This more or less masochistic, and hell-breeding belief is always accompanied by bad and niggled sculpture (Angoulême or Bengal). Gandhi to-day is incapable of making the dissociation, that it is not the body but its diseases and infirmities which are evil. The same statement is true of mind. The infections of mind being no less hideous than those of the physique. In fact, a man's toothache annoys himself, but a fool annoys the whole company. Even for epidemics, a few cranks may spread wider malefaction than anything short of plague universal. This invention of hells for one's enemies, and messy confusion in sculpture, is always symptomatic of supineness, bad hygiene, bad physique, (possibly envy); even the diseases of mind, they do not try to cure as such, but devise hells to punish not to heal the individual sufferer.

Against these european hindooes we find the "mediaeval clean line" as distinct from mediaeval niggles. Byzantium gives us perhaps the best architecture, or at least the best inner structure, that we know, I mean for proportions, for ornament flat on the walls, and not bulging and bumping and indulging in bulbous excrescence. The lines for example of the byzantine heritage in Sicily, from which the best "romanesque," developing to St Hilaire in Poitiers. Or if the term romanesque has become too ambiguous through loose usage, let me say that there are mediaeval churches, such as the cathedral at San Leo, or San Zeno in Verona, and others of similar form which are simply the byzantine minus riches. It is the bare wall that the Constantinopolitan would have had money enough to cover over with gold mosaic.

Perhaps out of a sand swept country, the need of interior harmony. That is conjecture. Against this clean architecture, we find the niggly, Angoulême, the architectural ornament of bigotry, superstition, and mess.

What is the difference between Provence and Hellas? There is, let us grant, a line in Propertius about *ingenium nobis fecit*. But the subject is not greatly developed. I mean that Propertius re-

mains mostly inside the classic world, and the classic aesthetic, plastic to coitus. Plastic plus immediate satisfaction.

The whole break of Provence with this world, and indeed the central theme of the troubadours is the dogma that there is some proportion between the fine thing held in the mind, and the inferior thing ready for instant consumption.

Their freedom is not an attack on Christian prudery, because prudery is not a peculiarly Christian excrescence. There is plenty of prudery in Virgil, and also in Ovid, where rumour wd. less lead one to expect it.

I am labouring all this because I want to establish a distinction as to the Tuscan aesthetic. The term metaphysic might be used if it weren't so appallingly associated in people's minds with unsupportable conjecture and devastated terms of abstraction.

The Tuscan demands harmony in something more than the plastic. He declines to limit his aesthetic to the impact of light on the eye. It would be misleading to reduce his aesthetic to terms of music, or to distort the analysis of it by analogies to the art of sonority. Man shares plastic with the statue, sound does not require a human being to produce it. The bird, the phonograph, sing. Sound can be exteriorized as completely as plastic. There is the residue of perception, perception of something which requires a human being to produce it. Which even may require a particular individual to produce it. This really complicates the aesthetic. You deal with an interactive force: the *virtu* in short.

And dealing with it is not anti-life. It is not maiming, it is not curtailment. The senses at first seem to project for a few yards beyond the body. Effect of a decent climate where a man leaves his nerve-set open, or allows it to tune-in to its ambience, rather than struggling, as a northern race has to for self-preservation, to guard the body from assaults of weather.

He declines, after a time to limit reception to his solar plexus. The whole thing has nothing to do with taboos and bigotries. It is more than the simple athleticism of the *mens sana in corpore sano*. The conception of the body as perfected instrument of the increasing intelligence pervades. The lack of this concept invalidates the whole of monastic thought. Dogmatic asceticism is obviously not essential to the perceptions of Guido's *ballate*.

Whether it is necessary to modernize or nordicize our terminology

and call this: "the aesthetic of interactive vaso-motor magnetism in relation to the consciousness," I leave to the reader's own taste and sense of proportion. I am inclined to think that a habit of mind which insists upon, or even tends toward, such terminology somewhat takes the bloom off the peach.

Out of these fine perceptions, or subsequent to them, people say that the Quattro Cento, or the sculpture of the Quattrocento discovered "personality." All of which is perhaps rather vague. We might say: The best Egyptian sculpture is magnificent plastic; but its force comes from a non-plastic idea, i.e., the god is inside the statue.

I am not considering the merits of the matter, much less those merits as seen by a modern aesthetic purist. I am using historic method. The god is inside the stone, *vacuos exercet aera morsus*. The force is arrested, but there is never any question about its latency, about the force being the essential, and the arrest merely "accidental" in the philosophic technical sense. The shape occurs.

There is hardly any debate about the greek classical sculpture, to them it is the plastic that matters.

In the case of the statue of the Etruscan Apollo at Villa Giulia (Rome) the "god is inside," but the psychology is merely that of an hallowe'en pumpkin. It is a weak derivation of fear motive, strong in mexican masks, but here reduced to the simple briskness of small boy amused at startling his grandma. This is a long way from greek statues, in which "the face don't matter."

This sculpture with something inside, revives in the quattrocento portrait bust. But the antecedents are in verbal manifestation.

Nobody can absorb the *poeti dei primi secoli* and then the paintings of the Uffizi without seeing the relation between them, Daniel, Ventadorn, Guido, Sellaio, Botticelli, Ambrogio Praedis, Cosimo Tura.

All these are clean, all without hell-obsession.

Certain values are established, and the neglect of them by later writers and artists is an impoverishment of their art. The stupidity of Rubens, the asinine nature of French Court life from Henry IV to the end of it, the insistence on two dimensional treatment of life by certain modernists, do not constitute a progress. A dogma builds



on vacuum, and is ultimately killed or modified by, or accommodated to, knowledge, but values once established stay, and ignorant neglect of them answers no purpose.

Loss of values is due usually to lumping and to lack of dissociation. The disproved is thrown out, and the associated, or contemporarily established, goes, temporarily with it.

*Durch Rafael ist das Madonnenideal Fleisch geworden*, says Herr Springer, with perhaps an unintentional rhyme. Certainly the metamorphosis into carnal tissue becomes frequent and general somewhere about 1527. The people are corpus, corpuscular, but not in the strict sense "animate," it is no longer the body of air clothed in the body of fire; it no longer radiates, light no longer moves from the eye, there is a great deal of meat, shock absorbing, perhaps—at any rate absorbant. It has not even greek marmoreal plastic to restrain it. The dinner scene is more frequently introduced, we have the characters in definite act of absorption; later they will be but stuffing for expensive upholsteries.

Long before that a change had begun in the poetry. The difference between Guido and Petrarch is not a mere difference in degree, it is a difference in kind.

There are certain things Petrarch does not know, cannot know. I am not postulating him as "to blame" for anything, or even finding analogy for his tone in post-peruginian painting.

Leave all question of any art save poetry. In that art the gulf between Petrarch's capacity and Guido's is the great gulf, not of degree, but of kind. In Guido the "figure," the strong metaphoric or "picturesque" expression is there with purpose to convey or to interpret a definite meaning. In Petrarch it is ornament, the prettiest ornament he could find, but not an irreplaceable ornament, or one that he couldn't have used just about as well somewhere else. In fact he very often does use it, and them, somewhere, and nearly everywhere, else, all over the place.

We appear to have lost the radiant world where one thought cuts through another with clean edge, a world of moving energies "*mezzo oscuro rade*," "*risplende in se perpetuale effecto*," magnetisms that take form, that are seen, or that border the visible, the matter of Dante's *paradiso*, the glass under water, the form that seems a form seen in a mirror, these realities perceptible to the



sense, interacting, "*a lui si tiri*" untouched by the two maladies, the hebrew disease, the hindoo disease, fanaticisms and excess that produce Savonarola, asceticisms that produce fakirs, St Clement of Alexandria, with his prohibition of bathing by women. The envy of dullards, who not having "*intelletto*," blame the lack of it on innocent muscles. For after asceticism, that is anti-flesh, we get the asceticism, that is anti-intelligence, that praises stupidity, as "simplicity," the cult of *naïveté*. To many people the term "mediaeval" connotes only the two diseases. We must avoid these unnecessary idea-clots. Between those diseases, existed the mediterranean sanity. The "*section d'or*," if that is what it meant, that gave the churches like St Hilaire, San Zeno, the Duomo di Modena, the clear lines and proportions. Not the pagan worship of strength, nor the greek perception of visual non-animate plastic, or plastic in which the being animate was not the main and principal quality, but this "harmony in the sentience" or harmony of the sentient, where the thought has its demarcation, the substance its *virtu*, where stupid men have not reduced all "energy" to unbounded undistinguished abstraction.

For the modern scientist energy has no borders, it is a shapeless "mass" of force; even his capacity to differentiate it to a degree never dreamed by the ancients, has not led him to think of its shape or even its loci. The rose that his magnet makes in the iron filings, does not lead him to think of the force in botanic terms, or wish to visualize that force as floral and extant (*ex stare*).

A mediaeval "natural philosopher" would find this modern world full of enchantments, not only the light in the electric bulb, but the thought of the current hidden in air and in wire would give him a mind full of forms, "*Fuor di color*" or having their hyper-colours. The mediaeval philosopher would probably have been unable to think the electric world, and *not* think of it as a world of forms. Perhaps algebra has queered our geometry. Even Bose with his plant experiments seems intent on the plants' capacity to feel—not on the plant idea, for the plant brain is obviously filled with, or is one idea, an *idée fixe*, a persistent notion of pattern from which only cataclysm or a Burbank can shake it. Or possibly this will fall under the eye of a contemporary scientist of genius who will answer: But, damn you, that is exactly what we do feel; or under the eye of a painter who will answer: confound you, you *ought* to find just that in my painting.

## LONDON LETTER

*February, 1928*

"A SMALL group of friends who were undergraduates at Cambridge at the beginning of the century came to have an influence on their time which can still hardly be gauged. Among these were the sons of Sir Leslie Stephen, the eminent Victorian biographer and agnostic. The Misses Vanessa and Virginia Stephen, their sisters, lived in London; and their house became the nucleus of the group, when the two brothers and their friends left Cambridge." I am quoting from the seventh volume of Sir Raymond Mortimer's trustworthy if academic *Studies in Twentieth-Century Culture* (Hogarth Press 1960). "The young ladies, who were as remarkable for their beauty as for their intellect, married two of their brothers' friends, Clive Bell and Leonard Woolf, who were to become celebrated, the one as an apostle of contemporary art, a vigorous pamphleteer, a poet, a historian of civilization, and a psychological biographer; the other as an editor, a publisher, and a politician. An important figure in this group was Edward Morgan Forster, novelist, critic, and historian. Perhaps the most influential was Giles Lytton Strachey, who later revolutionized the art of history: he is said to have shown from the first the almost fanatical intransigence in conduct and opinion which marks the leaders of important movements. But the group was always an oligarchy—fierce mutual criticism was the breath of its existence. Another dominating figure was John Maynard Keynes, the economist and politician, who by his marriage years later with Mme Lopokova, the first dancer of her day, brought leadership in yet another of the arts into this astonishing circle. Duncan Grant, though not a member of the University, was an early intimate of the group, and so was Roger Fry, though of an older generation of Cambridge men. It thus appears that from one small band of friends have come the subtlest novelists, the most famous economist, the most influential painters, the most distinguished historian, and the liveliest critics of the post-war period in England."

I have preferred to quote from the veteran critic, because my relations with the persons concerned are too close for me to be able to speak of them easily without impertinence. But the name of Bloomsbury is becoming familiar in Berlin, Paris, and, I pre-

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*Property of Clive Bell*

LYTTON STRACHEY. BY DUNCAN GRANT

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sume, New York as well as in London, and I think the time has come when a study of the genesis of the group and the character of those who compose it should be made public. I am certainly not the person to do this; but since I am writing a letter I may perhaps take a letter-writer's privileges and put down a few casual comments on what I see around me.

It is impossible to say where Bloomsbury begins, and where it ends. Are the painters, scholars, and journalists of a younger generation to be included? Arthur Waley? Francis Birrell? George Rylands? Douglas Davidson? Are old and intimate friends who have never become entirely imbued with the Bloomsbury spirit? And in fact what exactly is this spirit? I do not dare a definition. But I would place first a belief in Reason, and a conviction that the pursuit of Truth and a contemplation of Beauty are the most important of human activities. Obviously many of Bloomsbury's fiercest enemies might subscribe to this creed. The distinction of the leaders of the group is that they have acted upon it to an extraordinary extent. No subject of conversation has been taboo, no tradition accepted without examination, and no conclusion evaded. In a hypocritical society, they have been indecent; in a conservative society, curious; in a gentlemanly society, ruthless; and in a fighting society, pacifist. They have been passionate in their devotion to what they thought good, brutal in their rejection of what they thought second rate; resolute in their refusal to compromise. "Narrow in their tastes, loose in their view of morals, irreverent, unpatriotic, remote, and superior," their enemies say. And, I think, truly. For will not relentless reasoning and delicate discrimination make a man all these things?

Such vivid personalities as the leaders of the group could never of course commit themselves to any corporate doctrine of taste. But they have tended to exalt the classical in all the Arts: Racine, Milton, Poussin, Cézanne, Mozart, and Jane Austen have been their more cherished artists. Already the signs of a romantic revival are everywhere perceptible. The next generation is likely to react vigorously against the intellectualism of Bloomsbury. The younger French care as little for Voltaire as they do for Anatole France. Keyserling and Maurras, Chesterton and Lawrence, are united in their hatred of intellectualism. Indeed Monsieur Julien Benda seems almost the only important figure on the Continent whose views are akin to Bloomsbury's. But here anti-intellectualism has not yet found a champion adequately armed.

Obviously there is a romantic poet in Mrs Woolf, a mystic in Mr E. M. Forster, whereas Mr Strachey, for all his appreciation of Blake and Beddoes, remains in his outlook almost a contemporary of Voltaire. But compare these three writers with any outside the group, great Edwardians like Wells and Bennett, for instance, and a certain consonance in the Bloomsbury artists becomes, I think, apparent. For one thing they remain singularly unspotted by the world; too disillusioned to expect that their scale of values can ever command general assent. (Perhaps the fact that they almost all possessed small independent incomes gave them an initial advantage over many of their rivals.) The east wind of Cambridge philosophy braces their nerves. Pragmatism, Bergsonism, Oxford idealism, wither beneath it. And the historian of Bloomsbury will have to discuss the enormous influence on the group of George Moore, the author not of *The Book Kerith* but of *Principia Ethica*.

Why Bloomsbury? someone who does not know London may ask. It was Mrs Desmond MacCarthy, the author of *A Nineteenth Century Childhood* (she and her husband have always been intimate with the group) who, I believe, first gave it this name from the quarter of London where most of its members lived. It is a quarter honeycombed with spacious squares, where houses built for the gentry in the eighteenth century declined later into boarding-houses for impoverished foreigners and students at the University of London. The houses are for the most part still too big to be inhabited by single families, but the quarter is replacing Chelsea as the home of painters and writers. On summer evenings there is tennis on the lawns, and the Vicar's daughters can be seen playing with the bigwigs, ignorant of the dangerous company they keep. Around are figures reading and talking, and as night falls, the mourning veils in which London soot has dressed the Georgian façades become unnoticeable, and in these gardens you may fancy yourself in the precincts of a college. The passing of a quarter of a century is forgotten, the quick exchanges and curious conjectures, the vehement arguments, remake the past; and the commercial traveller arriving late at St Pancras' from the north, catches a glimpse as he passes of an unfamiliar and unhurrying London, of

groups under the dreaming garden-trees,  
And the full moon, and the white evening star.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

# BOOK REVIEWS

## SON AND MOTHER

THE LETTERS OF BAUDELAIRE. *Translated from the French by Arthur Symons. 8vo. 259 pages. A. & C. Boni. \$4.*

THERE are no letters by a great poet, not even the letters of John Keats, that contain within them so much suffering, so much rage, bitterness, and anguish as do the letters of this Frenchman, this undeceived Frenchman, propelled continually forward by biting poverty, retarded by unrelenting illness, driven mad by a sense of injustice, at swords' points with wily editors, determined landlords, and obtuse critics, yet endowed with a genius divine, sinister, and unmistakable.

And how singular, how indeed pathetic, that the cold, cynical, and lurid insight of this extraordinary man should have been thus revealed again and again to a woman as limited in vision, as incapable of understanding the slightest implication of her son's insight as was Mme Aupick, a woman consecrated to the very values in life that were his particular abhorrence! And for just this reason it is, perhaps, one of the most touching correspondences in all literature, touching because of Baudelaire's irrepressible, almost tremulous eagerness to gain his mother's respect, to compel her admiration, to receive from her the sanction, the tenderness and absolution, he never ceases to crave, and at the same time because of his unremitting and commendable determination to carry her with him, in all candour, on the dangerous spiritual and intellectual journeys which were so bewildering, so repelling, to her timid and orthodox nature. He, goaded by the mandates of his anger and his sensitiveness, always hopes to convince or to instruct her; she, stiffened by the severe advice of her husband or her priest, resists. Then suddenly he is disarmed by pity, by her suffering, by her recurrent desire to save him against even the reproaches of her counselors, and she is melted by her love, the love of a generous, devoted woman of narrow convictions and provincial tastes for the child of her womb, who, in spite of his overwhelming perversity, she still



adores. So, ill-assorted yet dependent, starting forward with hope, and receding with pain, they cling, united in the face of each freshly disrupting circumstance.

"You prefer to show your human sentiments to any other rather than me." "You are always armed to stone me with the crowd."

Then we read: "My dear good Mother, your letter made me weep; I who never weep . . ." "the only being on whom my life hangs . . ." "my love for you grows without ceasing." "After your death I should undoubtedly kill myself." "You alone can save me." His solicitude for her becomes at last so acute that he cannot bear to think of her crossing the street lest she be run over, and to hear of her suffering any pain, any discomfiture prevents his sleeping at night. And she, on her part, after the death of her husband, Baudelaire's step-father, is constantly consumed with alarms and apprehensions about his welfare. Indeed, one is brought to reflect once more on this curious, much esteemed relationship, the relationship of mother and son, or mother and child, on the place it holds in this, our perishable life.

Baudelaire's last letters to his mother are full of his longing to be at rest, free of the pain that corrodes and tears him, the constant neuralgia in his head, the nausea and dizziness, at home once more in the "*maisonnette*" at Honfleur with "the only person in the world who never bores me," "the only living person who interests me." But this is a wish never to be satisfied. For, aged and infirm, yet permitted no moment of respite or hesitation Mme Aupick is called to her son's bedside in Brussels. "I always feel toward you like a timid child," he once wrote her and it is, indeed, as a little child that she takes him back with her on that last sad, pitiable journey. Never again was he to startle a Paris he despised and revered, never again, like Leopardi, was he to cry out against "the horrible torture of boredom."

"What I suffer in living is almost inexpressible. The greater part of the time I tell myself: if I live I shall always live in the same manner, damned, and when my natural end comes, I shall be old, worn out, out of fashion, riddled with debts and forever dishonoured. . . ." Thus he wrote seven years before his death. It is satisfactory to know that the *macabre* terrors of his nights, the darkness of his days, are no more, and that the fame, "that last infirmity of noble mind," the fame he so jealously coveted, can now, with the passing of time, no longer be contested.

## A SAILOR AND A SENATOR

JOHN PAUL JONES: *Man of Action.* By Phillips Russell.  
*With Drawings by Leon Underwood.* 8vo. 314 pages.  
Brentano's. \$5.

THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM MACLAY, United States Senator from Pennsylvania, 1789-1791. *Introduction by Charles A. Beard.* 8vo. 429 pages. A. & C. Boni. \$4.

THE popular passion for biography is one of the most amusing distractions that the dulness and disappointment of modern English-speaking life has cast up. During the last five years, if we are to believe those persons in the business, the English language has been ornamented with no less than fifty great biographies—not to mention a score of Rousseaux among novelists. The American audience is immense; its indiscrimination is amazing: those who go to books not for an imagination of life but a confirmation of it are compelled to divide all books into good, bad, and indifferent.

These books are both good, and one of them has already survived the harvest and havoc of time. Mr Phillips Russell was very successful a year or so ago with a popular life of Benjamin Franklin; here, between decidedly promising covers, elaborate end-papers, and interspersed with eight original drawings by Mr Leon Underwood are the results of what must have been a labour of love for any student of American history. The public career of John Paul Jones was, as every school-boy ought to know, prodigiously important and immensely romantic, without any strain on any one of four words: during our revolution it was he alone who "carried the war into Africa," and his feat was never duplicated on land or sea, with any measure of success. As a public character Jones is a shining example of the conversion of natural resources: his was the making of a superior pirate (after the fashion of the eighteenth century) but circumstances made him the "knight-errant of a new nation."

It is, of course, with the private life of its victims that the new biography has most to do. Mr Phillips Russell has worked at this with taste, and skill, and patience, for in spite of writings (chiefly journals) that would fill a ponderous volume, if collected, John Paul Jones, knowingly or not, practised the wisdom of Epicurus

and hid his life. The reader would do well to take a long look at the frontispiece (a photograph of the bust by Houdon) before beginning this astonishing story—an odyssey that carries its swarthy dandy of a hero from the west coast of Scotland to a squalid death in Paris by way of revolution in America and an empress in Russia. To discover the variety of this adventurous career one has only to remember that Jones served alike with Jefferson and Potemkin—at opposite ends of the earth.

In these supercilious days the popular appearance of Mr Russell's book could perhaps militate against its success as a "solid contribution to history." The illustrations are fanciful and every chapter is headed by a stanza from *The Ancient Mariner*, but absence of the sacred foot-note is partially atoned for by the inclusion of several documents, an appendix, and an index. One suspects that the scholarship of this work is purposely disguised in order to deceive an obstinately unprofessional public. Those citizens to whom the current novel has become insufferably dull could not do better than begin their "good reading" with the tragedy of John Paul Jones.

If the layman should wonder that Jones died in want and neglect as early as the first administration of Washington, *The Journal of William Maclay* would supply a complete corrective to his puzzled wits. The American Revolution, like many other wars, produced two sets of men, the first to accomplish the results, and the second to acquire the benefits. Once independence had been achieved, men of action passed into the discard—or became the puppets and playthings of men of policy. Shrewd speculators bought up the lands and paper money with which the soldiers had been paid and traded them for gold with Alexander Hamilton, who never got round to paying John Paul Jones. Even in the new government General Washington would have been more convenient as king than as president.

Of William Maclay it might honestly be said: before Jefferson was, he is. As a member of the first senate of the United States for a two-year term, he assisted at the legislative and administrative birth of a nation. In 1791 he retired to his farm in disgust, having kept a journal which is one of the primary, if most unedifying sources of American history. Angry patriots have dismissed his evidence as the chronic complaints of suspicion and obstinacy. Not even allowing for the incorrigible democratic bias of Senator Maclay, his record of the secrecy of those first two sessions of the upper house agrees reasonably well with the conveniently forgotten

facts of public history. The greed, the petty squabbling, the insincerity and downright dishonesty of the professionally indecent political life of New York City fairly choke him. The cool sarcasm and irony of his livelier pages reveal a man schooled in the wisdom of this world, a man who properly appraised that wisdom as cynicism at second hand.

To this reprint of the edition of 1890 Charles A. Beard contributes an introduction which is, as one might expect, a delight, especially the spirit in which he points out that Maclay (whose judgments were not infrequently too severe) was "unacquainted with that great law of political science according to which the bee fertilizes the flower that it despoils, working wonders in destiny beyond the purposes of the hour"—and therefore, we are to conclude, too harsh an historian of our heroic past. But the able language and the self-confident narrative style of this incorruptible objector cast a charm over the reader and lead him on from rage to rage. Because it was a good thing, that somewhat obtrusive integrity of Maclay, one can almost hear the sigh of relief with which his fellow-senators saw him set out for his farm.

Besides containing a secret history of the lobbying and legislation of that famous first session, Maclay's journal is a gallery of portraits and character sketches—not entirely fair always to the august persons who unconsciously sat for them, for Maclay wanted charity. But his position was one of peculiar difficulty: in common with many people at the frontier, he had taken the Declaration of Independence seriously, and to sit by and see liberty wounded in the house of its friends was hardly quieting to his nerves. A keen, quick man, honest enough to note "the infinite gradations by which corruption steals into the world," he saw the exploiting power of self-interest secure a permanent advantage, unshakable even by a Jefferson, a Jackson, or a Wilson, and was brave enough to make a noise about it. Lying in the wreckage at the bottom of the precipice of 1917, it is difficult for us to estimate the ruin around us, but somehow we can dimly guess the truth of the past from the present—we know why Maclay liked Harrisburg and John Paul Jones went off to Russia. Just possibly they both of them would have divided all men into sheep and wolves, leaving to ourselves the addition of sundry swine, skunks, and snakes—but such thoughts are not pious or pretty: they are the fruits of impatience, which a great cardinal once called the soil and seed of heresy.

## THE POEMS ENGLISH LATIN AND GREEK OF RICHARD CRASHAW

THE POEMS ENGLISH LATIN AND GREEK OF RICHARD  
CRASHAW. Edited by L. C. Martin. 10mo. 474 pages.  
Oxford University Press, American Branch. \$7.

NO higher compliment can be paid to this book than to say that in editing and in production it is worthy of the fine series of seventeenth-century poets of which it is a member. Memorable in this series are Saintsbury's Caroline Poets (without which Benlowes, Cleveland, and King would be almost inaccessible), Grierson's Donne, Margoliouth's Marvell, and Professor Martin's own Vaughan. This edition of Crashaw was much needed. Heretofore the only scholarly edition was that of Waller, in 1904. It was a good edition for its time; but the text was neither well established nor complete; and for an ordinary reader it had the disadvantage that one sometimes had to hunt to find the poem one wanted. Mr Martin has collated the texts and gives the variants, without disfiguring the pages of a very handsome and practical book. His notes deserve particular attention, for Crashaw is a poet who needs notes—not for reading for pleasure—but if we wish to study him in relation to his time. Poets of that age made use of each other pretty freely; Crashaw for one was well read (thanks partly to his father's library) in the Italian and Latin poetry of his time, which was Legion. Mr Martin's notes give many interesting parallels. If there is anything more to be discovered about Crashaw, it will be in the way of further derivations.

Having given due praise to the edition, I must confess to some disappointment with the introduction. It gives a very dense summary of the facts, and includes an extremely interesting letter written by Crashaw. But Mr Martin seems over-anxious not to use too much space: on the other hand the one critical opinion on which he ventures does not seem to me happy. Perhaps I expected, in default of any critical biography of Crashaw, something that would take its place; something as good as Grierson's capital study of Donne in his edition of that poet above mentioned. We are still left with no first-rate criticism of Crashaw in English. The best

study of Crashaw that I know, and a very fine and suggestive essay, is that by Mario Praz in his *Secentismo e Marinismo in Inghilterra*: a badly named book, as it consists merely of a very fine essay on Donne and a still finer essay on Crashaw.

"When we survey," says Professor Martin, "the remarkable development of Crashaw's genius close up to the end of his life, in circumstances that must often have been trying and distracting in the extreme, his 'unfulfilled renown' becomes indeed comparable with that of those other two English poets whose work his own in some ways strangely foreshadows, and who, like him, found in Italy a retreat and a final resting place." (I wish Mr Martin had saved a line or two by saying Keats and Shelley straight out, instead of searching for a fine phrase.) Now this remark might lead to several false inferences. Crashaw lived to be about thirty-seven; so he had some good years more than Keats or Shelley in which to develop. A man can go far between twenty-seven and thirty-seven. Mr Martin is therefore unfair to Keats and Shelley. But moreover Crashaw's verse is, as one would expect, far more mature than that of either of these poets; and I do not find in the poem on which he bases this suggestion, the Letter to the Countess of Denbigh, the evidence of *promise* that Mr Martin finds in it. It is indeed a fine poem, but it is the work of a mature master, and promises nothing but more of the same kind. Crashaw is, I believe, a much greater poet than he is usually supposed to be; Keats and Shelley are, in their actual accomplishment, not nearly such great poets as they are supposed to be. But nothing that Crashaw wrote has the *promise* that is patent in *Hyperion* or *The Triumph of Life*. We must try of course always to distinguish promise from performance; both must be taken into account in judging a poet, and they must be kept separate. We can only say that Keats and Shelley would *probably* have become greater poets, poets on a much greater scale, than Crashaw; judging them on their accomplishment only, Crashaw was a finished master, and Keats and Shelley were apprentices with immense possibilities before them.

So much for one question. Next, in what way can Crashaw be said to "foreshadow" Keats and Shelley? As for Keats, I simply do not know what Mr Martin means, I see so little resemblance. With Shelley, there are obvious and striking resemblances, though I think very superficial ones. To suggest, as Mr Martin's words seem to me to suggest, that Crashaw was in any way a forerunner



or "prophet" of Shelley, is quite off the rails. The obvious parallel is between The Weeper and The Skylark, rather than between their uses of the octosyllabic couplet, which are wholly different.

"The dew no more will weepe,  
The Primroses pale cheekes to decke,  
The deaw no more will sleepe,  
Nuzzel'd in the Lillies neck.  
Much rather would it tremble heere,  
And leave them both to bee thy Teare.

Not the soft Gold which  
Steales from the Amber-weeping Tree,  
Makes sorrow halfe so Rich,  
As the drops distil'd from thee.  
Sorrowes best Jewels lye in these  
Caskets, of which Heaven keeps the Keyes.

Not in the Evenings Eyes  
When they red with weeping are,  
For the Sun that dyes,  
Sits sorrow with a face so faire.  
Nowhere but heere did ever meet  
Sweetnesse so sad, sadnes so sweet."

I doubt whether the *sound* of two poems can be very similar, when the *sense* is entirely different. At any rate, I have found that the more I studied the meaning of Crashaw's verse, and his peculiar use of image and conceit, the less resemblance the music of it seemed to have to Shelley's. Take one of Crashaw's more extreme and grotesque figures, from The Tear:

"Faire Drop, why quak'st thou so?  
'Cause thou streight must lay thy Head  
In the Dust? o no;  
The Dust shall never bee thy Bed:  
A pillow for thee will I bring,  
Stuft with Downe of Angels wing."



This imagery is typical of the quintessence of an immense mass of devotional verse of the seventeenth century. But it has nothing to do with Shelley. Crashaw's images, even when entirely preposterous—for there is no warrant for bringing a pillow (and what a pillow!) for the *head of a tear*—give a kind of intellectual pleasure—it is a deliberate conscious perversity of language, a perversity like that of the amazing and amazingly impressive interior of St Peter's. There is brain work in it. But in *The Skylark* there is no brain work. For the first time perhaps in verse of such eminence, sound exists without sense. Crashaw would never have written so shabby a line as "That from heaven or near it" merely to provide an imperfect rhyme for *spirit*.

"Keen as are the arrows  
Of that silver sphere  
Whose intense lamp narrows  
In the white dawn clear,  
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there."

I should be grateful for any explanation of this stanza; until now I am still ignorant to what Sphere Shelley refers, or why it should have silver arrows, or what the devil he means by an intense lamp narrowing in the white dawn; though I can understand that we could hardly see the lamp of a *silver* sphere narrowing in *white* dawn (why dawn? as he has just referred to the pale purple even). There may be some clue for persons more learned than I; but Shelley should have provided notes. Crashaw does not need *such* notes.

And when Shelley has some definite statement to make, he simply says it; keeps his images on one side and his meanings on the other:

"We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

This is a sweeping assertion, and is rather commonplace in expression; but it is intelligible. And it is not in the least like Crashaw.

I call Crashaw a "devotional" poet, because the word "religious" is so abused. Shelley even has been called religious, but he could not be called devout; he is religious in the same sense as when we say that Dean Inge or the Bishop of Birmingham is religious. Devotional poetry is religious poetry which falls within an exact faith and has precise objects for contemplation. Crashaw is sometimes called erotic in his devotion. "Erotic" is an abused word, but in any case ought not to be an offensive word. In one aspect it may be applied to Crashaw. Dante, for instance, always seems perfectly aware of every shade of both human and divine love; Beatrice is his means of transition between the two; and there is never any danger of his confounding the two loves. But just as Crashaw is deficient in humanity, and yet is neither quite in the world or out of it, and so is neither a Dante nor an Adam of St Victor; so we feel at times that his passion for heavenly objects is imperfect because it is partly a substitute for human passion. It is not impure, but it is incomplete.

Yet Crashaw is quite alone in his peculiar kind of greatness. He is alone among the metaphysical poets of England, who were mostly intensely English: Crashaw is primarily a European. He was saturated still more in Italian and Latin poetry than in English. Indeed Mr Mario Praz, who has probably read more than anybody of the Latin poetry and the continental poetry of the seventeenth century, puts Crashaw above Marino, Góngora, and everybody else, merely as the *representative* of the baroque spirit in literature.

T. S. ELIOT.

## BRIEFER MENTION

MRS LEICESTER'S SCHOOL, by Charles and Mary Lamb, with illustrations by Winifred Green (12mo, 128 pages; Dutton: \$3). In these ten stories which purport to have been told by school-girls for the entertainment of school-companions on the first evening of arrival at school, we have that novelty in naturalness, height in humility, and humour in gravity, which are peculiarly Charles Lamb's. Should specifically the excellences which we have in mind be Mary Lamb's, the piecing is so perfect and so sensitively unisistent that anonymity again seems like a signature.

THE LAST POST, by Ford Madox Ford (12mo, 285 pages; A. & C. Boni: \$2.50) is the final volume in the series which began with *Some Do Not and No More Parades*. It seemed when *A Man Could Stand Up* appeared that it was passage work, a transition to the final novel; it turns out that the series ended better with the third. From the preface we judge that it was intended to end there for the book was written only because a woman novelist (Isabel Paterson) wanted to know "what became of Tietjens." It was an unnecessary curiosity and Mr Ford has answered it in an uninspired way. The centre of interest shifts in this book to Tietjens' brother and no amount of explanation of the inner meaning of the series will condone that shift. Apart from this, the technical feat in the final volume is exceptional, and leaves a sense of fruitlessness; the vine was forced and refused to bear. To those who cared only moderately for the first two books, this will not seem important. They will suffer more who held them to be among the few fine novels of our time.

TRAVELLERS' TALES, by H. C. Adams (8vo, 334 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$3.50). Here the reader will find all those tales that throughout the generations have set men marvelling. Fables, legends, travellers' hearsay follow one upon the other, strung together by the craft of a good-natured, academic, mildly ironic Sussex clergyman in the year 1882.

YELLOW GENTIAN AND BLUE, by Zona Gale (12mo, 188 pages; Appleton: \$2). These stories belong to the same *genre* as those in *Winesburg, Ohio*. They are more foreshortened, more compact, and perhaps more deft, but Miss Gale lacks Mr Anderson's authentic love of nature and a certain poetic reflectiveness that glimmers through his pages. Both authors are equally betrayed by sentiment and equally sympathetic with the conflicts and misfortunes of obscure and simple people.

KEW GARDENS, by Virginia Woolf, with decorations by Vanessa Bell (8vo, 22 pages; Hogarth Press: 15s). A suggestive bit of prose preciousity that drifts, at moments, almost into the Gertrude Stein manner, yet leaves upon the reader a clear impression of a hot afternoon in a park, with echoes of the conversation of passers-by cutting in upon observations of the lazy activities of snails, and other vermin, in the grass. There is no moral, which, paradoxically, may be the moral.

**STEEP ASCENT**, by Jean Starr Untermeyer (12mo, 57 pages; Macmillan: \$1.25). Mrs Untermeyer is one of those poets who use the word beauty somewhat too frequently and with too little care. Though her verses rise now and then to an expression of unaffected spiritual trouble they are not, on the whole, distinguished by an emotion that is unselfconscious or an intellect that rejects the facile.

**LYRICS FROM THE OLD SONG BOOKS**, collected and edited by Edmonstone Duncan (12mo, 611 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$4). This is a delightful selection of melodies, ballads, and love-ditties chosen from the earliest times up to the present day. Each one has been set to some old-world tune and these by means of the annotations can be traced to their original sources.

**ADVENTURES IN ARABIA**, by W. B. Seabrook (8vo, 347 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3) is a vigorous and refreshing narrative of travel without ulterior motives—an example of first-hand journalism characterized by alertness and a beguiling informality. Fortunately the world still shelters a few outposts of the picturesque to challenge the romantic traveller. Mr Seabrook is happily no disciple of Thomas Cook.

**THE SPANISH JOURNEY**, by Julius Meier-Graefe, translated by J. Holroyd-Reece, with drawings by J. Sima and reproductions from El Greco (8vo, 464 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$5). This was written when the author was young and fuller of vim than discretion. He felt himself an opostle of Cézanne and modernism and looking about for an old master to serve as background for his new enthusiasms fell upon El Greco; whom he promptly elevated to the supreme heights. El Greco, it may be conceded, is the logical old master for this particular period, but the rash Mr Meier-Graefe, to prove this, thought it necessary to destroy Velasquez!!

**CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, An Episodical History**, by Arthur Gray (8vo, 310 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$6). An up-to-date history of Cambridge University was badly wanted, and this book with its beautiful pictures of the famous colleges supplies our need after a manner. The present Master of Jesus College writes with dignity, but his sojourn under the shadow of Sterne's walnut-tree has not, it is clear, imparted to his pen any Shandean liveliness.

**A FLORENTINE DIARY, From 1450 to 1516**, by Luca Landucci, translated from the Italian by Alice de Rosen Jervis (illus., 12mo, 308 pages; Dutton: \$3). This diarist, a simple, sensible, pious, unintellectual apothecary, records faithfully the stirring events in the days of the Medici and contrives a vivid picture of the time. It is decidedly worth something to note the impression that Savonarola makes upon such a person, and his account of the activities that led up to the martyrdom supplements strangely what the scholars have said. He at least makes the tragedy inevitable. Such an interfering Savonarola would have met the same fate in any period.

**THE WORLD IN THE MAKING**, by Count Hermann von Keyserling, translated from the German by Maurice Samuel (10mo, 293 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50). It's a self-conscious age—but self-consciousness is a virtue instead of a vice. Spirit will count in the future more than in the past—just because it is aware of itself. The mass-type of the period is the chauffeur-type—he who is not, it is true, so cultured as he might be, but who is suited to the technical standards of the day. The leaders of the Soviet and the Fascisti are chauffeur-types. Lenin is higher, apparently than Mussolini. At least he is linked in the same phrase with Jesus Christ. The Soviet appears to typify actual progress to Count Keyserling more than it does to most Americans. In fact most Americans will consider Count Keyserling entirely confused by the European effects of the war and too enmeshed in its present chaos to properly appreciate the steady influence upon the world of America's great financial machine.

**RASPUTIN**, by Prince Felix Youssouppoff (8vo, 246 pages; Lincoln MacVeagh, Dial Press: \$5). "Civilized countries live in close contact with the leprosy of Bolshevism; they stretch out a hand to the servants of the devil and are not choked by the moral rot and stench which, like poison gas, are spread over the entire earth by that criminal organization—the Third International." When it comes to blanket indictments, the prince is inclusive if not judicial. Rasputin, the Empress Alexandra, the Russian peasantry, the Germans—all are scratched by the venom of his pen. He reserves his applause for himself and his noble co-conspirators, but the *claque* is not impressive.

**BISMARCK, The Story of a Fighter**, by Emil Ludwig, translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul (8vo, 661 pages; Little, Brown: \$5); **BISMARCK, Three Plays**, by Emil Ludwig (8vo, 405 pages; Putnam: \$3.75); **GENIUS AND CHARACTER**, by Emil Ludwig, translated from the German by Kenneth Burke (8vo, 346 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3.50). Emil Ludwig is accused of being a journalist and may, even when at his best, be justly reproached with journalism, but, just the same, he is, when at his best, an exceptionally good journalist. It is difficult to think of any American newspaper person, for instance, who thinks of Plutarch when setting out to write biographies. The fact that the reader himself does not think of Plutarch when reading Mr Ludwig is beside the point. Mr Ludwig is ambitious and forceful, aware of the modern intoleration of the "perfect hero" yet immensely content with his own hero, Bismarck, and making out an excellent case for him. He is bigoted enough not to see that it was the Bismarck principle for prussianism, as much as anything else, that sunk the ship for William II and blames the whole catastrophe upon the latter's bad seamanship. But in spite of the limitation just noted, the issuance of such books as this new Bismarck with its understandable and "all-too-human" strong man posed against an equally understandable ideal of the Fatherland must do something, even in the Fatherland itself, towards mitigating the prussianism that recently proved so costly.

**THE LIFE OF TIM HEALY**, by Liam O'Flaherty (8vo, 318 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3.75) is not biography—it is a pamphlet against nationalism, imperialism, and clericalism, written with the weary energy of a man who is tired to death of his topics but who has enough physical vitality in him to round off his job somehow. As a pamphlet it is three times too long. Mr Healy appears in the pages only incidentally. When he does appear only one side of his personality is presented. Now Mr Healy is really a very interesting and a very complex personality. On one side of his being he is private-minded, revengeful, foul-mouthed; on another side he has an extraordinary magnanimity, even an extraordinary humility. His eloquence and his piercing wit have sometimes been given to forsaken causes and have been directed against the great powers of the world. Liam O'Flaherty does not seem to have read *Stolen Waters*, that piece of patient research and eloquent statement made on behalf of the unfriended fishermen of a North of Ireland lake. And his denunciation of mean and evil measures has often been in the great style of oratory—witness the speech made in the British House of Commons in his attack on the conduct of the Boer War. It would be a fitting punishment for a man who left goats and sea-gulls and butterflies to write on topics which had no interest for him, if, when he reaches the age of three score years and ten, someone wrote the *Life of Liam O'Flaherty* with the carelessness with which he has written the *Life of Tim Healy*.

**PORTRAITS IN COLOR**, by Mary White Ovington (10mo, 241 pages; Viking Press: \$2) is a survey of the lives and an estimate of the achievements of twenty contemporary Negroes—a volume informal and informative, reflecting a justifiable pride yet free from unnecessary racial flourishes. The author has a sure hand in the fashioning of the biographical sketch; her appreciations are in no sense mere journalism. The portraits have been drawn from many fields of attainment; educators, executives, scientists, and artists appear in a notable gallery.

**BARNUM'S OWN STORY**, *The Autobiography of P. T. Barnum* (10mo, 452 pages; Viking Press: \$3) is a condensation of the many versions Barnum issued of his autobiography. It is a source book in showmanship, an entertaining background-book for a long and interesting period in American life, and is always full of Barnum's Yankee personality. The absence of a white page between the last page of text and the coloured flap of the back cover is deplorable in an otherwise properly made book.

**THE NEW AMERICAN CREDO**, by George Jean Nathan (12mo, 223 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) consists of 1231 doctrines which Americans are supposed by Mr Nathan to believe. Some they do believe; others some believe; many are not peculiar to Americans; the vast majority of them is probably not believed by the vast majority of Americans. (Proof is lacking either way, but do most Americans believe that a piece of camphor worn on a string round the neck will ward off disease? Statistics are wanted; also, how many Europeans believe the same thing?) These beliefs are supposed by the author to "constitute the doctrinal body of contemporary American philosophy," but almost any joke in more than a thousand paragraphs becomes tedious.



The sixth series of *PREJUDICES*, by H. L. Mencken (12mo, 317 pages; Knopf: \$2.50) is like the others in many ways, but it betrays what one has to call mellowness in the great iconoclast. He notes that Illinois, Maryland, and many other states (as opposed to the southern states) "welcome the free play of ideas"; he writes a hymn to the barbaric splendour of New York; he finds that Valentino was a gentleman. The old Mencken persists, the intelligent critic, the hater of poetry (as he thinks), the mocker, the extraordinarily interesting political observer. In this volume, too, appears an appreciation of Ambrose Bierce which is restrained in tone and utterly abandoned in admiring such second-rate work as *The Devil's Dictionary*. Admirers of Mencken should also read his *JAMES BRANCH CABELL* (limited edition, 8vo, 31 pages; McBride: paper edition free of charge from the publisher) both as an index to Mencken's aesthetic taste and for his illumination on Jurgens as the predecessor of Babbitt.

*LITERARY BLASPHEMIES*, by Ernest Boyd (8vo, 265 pages; Harpers: \$2.50) has, on the jacket: "Shakespeare debunked—the real Dickens discovered behind the whiskers—Hardy compelled to face the rank melodrama of his plots," and so forth. The book is better than that. Mr Boyd is himself aware of the fact that his blasphemies are not new, for he quotes earlier critics who share his unorthodox views of the great. Actually it is a study in the way reputations are made and upheld; it consists of corrective foot-notes to idolatry. It would be even a better book if Mr Boyd did not ride his hobbies—the French of Mr Eliot, the crimes of literary experimenters—so hard. In the essay on James, Mr Boyd says that Meredith was "so supremely the master of all that Henry James tried to accomplish" and Charles Dickens is set down as "an excellent writer for children"; Poe's "high status" is ascribed to a desire to prove emancipation by investing with glamour the wickedness our forefathers held in abhorrence. Jonathan Swift comes off best, but it doesn't seem probable that he is as little known for a great writer as Mr Boyd implies.

*ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL*, by E. M. Forster (12mo, 250 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$2.50) approaches its theme with an engaging candour and a persuasive informality, yet embedded in these urbane paragraphs are some of the most profound truths about the writing of fiction which have recently come to light. Mr Forster's analysis of the methods of the novelist lacks the cerebral intensity of Percy Lubbock's study, but it is quite as stimulating. His logic is as inescapable as it is undogmatic, and his judgements are all the wiser for the twinkle which accompanies them.

*NATIONAL CHARACTER and the Factors of its Formation*, by Ernest Barker (8vo, 282 pages; Harpers: \$3.50). In these lectures delivered originally at the University of Glasgow the author studies and elucidates the history and growth of citizenship as expressed particularly in the English nation. Especially interesting is the chapter on Language, Literature and Thought, but, indeed, throughout this admirable book one is in contact with a mind versed in wresting clarity and life from a subject too often relegated to the class-room.



**BIOGRAPHY:** *The Literature of Personality*, by James C. Johnston, foreword by Gamaliel Bradford (12mo, 312 pages; Century: \$2.50) in its purpose to expound the art of biography and indicate some principles of its appreciation, can scarcely be too much praised and one can say with the author, "While would-be biographers are as numerous as short story writers, scarcely any of them have made an effort to give the public much aid in appreciating their art." The reader cannot be so enthusiastic, however, about the execution of the purpose. Nothing, for instance, is here said of the steadily increasing importance to biography of proper applications of the data of modern psychology, a vital matter surely, as is sufficiently indicated by numerous misapplications in current life writing. And while several general principles emerge from the discussion, such as W. R. Thayer's well-taken point that biography should be set forth as nearly as possible as the subject lived it; yet in the main the possible great treatment of a great subject is rather congested and obscured by much that is casual and irrelevant.

**PEACE OR WAR?** by Lt. Commander J. M. Kenworthy, with an introduction by H. G. Wells (10mo, 319 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2.50). After reading this alarming book, packed with so many convincing facts, so much trenchant and impressive argument, one feels that no danger existing to-day is as serious as is the danger of war, of the next war, of the war that is now preparing. One is inclined, however, to agree with Mr Wells that the solution of the problem is somewhat more complex than Lt Commander Kenworthy seems to imply.

**THE SEARCH FOR ATLANTIS**, *Excursions of a Layman among Old Legends and New Discoveries*, by Edwin Bjorkman (12mo, 119 pages; Knopf: \$2). The search for Atlantis goes on. In *THE DIAL* for January, 1926, The Problem of Atlantis was reviewed, and a point made against the argument of that book was that the distance in time postulated by Mr Lewis Spence—from 6000 B.C. to the time of Plato's informants—over which the Atlantean tradition was carried was too vast for human memory. The opposite point may be urged against Mr Bjorkman's conclusions—the time allowed for the creation of the myth about Atlantis is too short—from the closing of the Atlantic trade-routes by the Carthaginians to Plato's time—only about a hundred years. The Search for Atlantis is a popularization of the results of researches still being carried out in Spain under the direction of Professor Adolf Schulten. But if it is a popularization of material discovered by these researches and already exploited in a German work, it is a brilliant and a very readable popularization. Mr Bjorkman shows himself both critical and imaginative in dealing with this most fascinating of historical problems; his book, besides, gives us the latest information on the problem of the early Mediterranean world as it has come out of the researches in Crete and Spain. It appears that there was "the Hesperian counterpart of the ancient cultural centres of the Orient." That counterpart was Tartessos in Spain. There are quite good reasons given in *The Search for Atlantis* for identifying the Scheria of Homer and the Atlantis of Plato with this Hesperian cultural centre.

## THE THEATRE

THE capital event of the season has been the presentation, by the greatest player of our time, of another in his series of masterpieces; I mean *THE CIRCUS*. The long wait since Chaplin's previous film, the indignities he has suffered in that time, have played their part in creating a fresh critical attitude toward his work, and most of the discussion about the new work has been beside the point which is not whether this film is greater than *THE KID* or *THE GOLD RUSH* or any other, but whether Chaplin has retained his enchantment and developed in his art.

To the first of these the answer is unequivocally yes. The sense of deep satisfaction and enjoyment while the film is going on, the sense of elation which fills one after it is over, are here, as potent as ever. There is no flagging of inventiveness, no coarsening of the fine creative touches, no failure of the imagination. All but the last ten minutes of the picture are a bravura piece, a display in which talent and genius mingle so that you are in the midst of admiring the one when you begin to adore the other. The mastery of the instrument continues: there is a scene in a mirror maze which is perfectly cinematographic, tremendously funny, and beautifully built for its climax. There are scenes in which simple emotions are expressed with absolute perfection; such as that in which Charlie misinterprets a fortune-teller's prophecy and believes himself loved—I do not know an artistic dancer in the world who could so plainly say the word Joy as he says it; there are comic things in such profusion that it would be idle to number them.

Chaplin's power to enchant has in it many elements beside his art, among them his physical capacities and his outlook on life. But even in what I have said above I have indicated that his art of playing remains miraculous. His construction of films has never been perfect and in this one it is no better than usual; the long working out after the climax needs hastening. Otherwise, I see no falling off. He has chosen to put in (or to leave in) the film less of those moments when by a gesture he suddenly creates a new world of fantasy out of the actual world around him, but there are several which show his power—one in which he is arguing with

the circus boss and, to show how determined he is, seizes a handful of hay and breaks it in two, another in which he creates himself as the pedantically polite person by settling his coat.

There is a weak spot in *THE CIRCUS* and it deserves attention. For the past five years at least Mr Chaplin has been called a great artist and there are not wanting those who claim that this has spoiled him. (In a sense this film plays with that idea; just as *THE GOLD RUSH* was the story of a man who found wealth and missed happiness, so this is the story of a clown who was funny until he was told he was funny; but Chaplin cannily evades the issue because the clown's failure to amuse is definitely ascribed to his discovery that his adored one loves another.) It is suggested that Chaplin is trying too hard to fill his films with cosmic implications, is too consciously playing the tragic little figure.

Well, the facts are that he was not only a great artist, but a conscious artist, long before we began chattering about him; and that all the things people now think of as the faults of self-consciousness were in his films before they began to look at them. What is more, *THE CIRCUS* has less, not more, of these elements; it has more, not less, of the Chaplin of *A DOG'S LIFE*, of the Keystone comedian. And where does the picture fall down? In philosophy? It has little and strives for no more. In trying to be artistic? There is only one bad tinted shot. In forcing the tragic note? Will those who think so please go see *THE BANK* or any other film in which Charlie is disappointed in love? No. It fails when Chaplin has reached his sublime moment, the moment when the clown, substituting for the tightrope-walker, suddenly becomes aware that the invisible wire upon which he has depended, has left him. It is supremely achieved and then Mr Chaplin, distrusting his popular audience, allows a flock of monkeys to attack him on the tightrope and to bite his nose and tear his clothes. He may be entirely right in his judgement; the audience howled over it. For me, almost always willing to accept his most popular moments as his best, it was ruinous. But it was not the fault of the aesthetes; it was the fault of the medium (commercially speaking) and of the artist himself. The aesthetes would have told him that up to that moment the very skill of the amateur walker, the illusion of reality, was fantastic, and that his fantasy brought us back dully to realism.

I think Mr Chaplin doesn't listen to the aesthetes and that may be why he remains a great artist. For he is one and *THE CIRCUS* remains in the canon of his great films. Having performed my duty as a critic by making one reservation, I return to my status as a citizen and know that my memory has been enriched with something extraordinarily precious.

On the production of *MARCO MILLIONS* I think it only fair to congratulate The Theatre Guild, the actors, the designer of the sets, the director, the composer of the music, the ticket taker, the ushers—everybody, in short, except the author, Eugene O'Neill. A few years ago, when the play was written, a production was intended by Mr Belasco; at that time another attack on the bowed head of George F. Babbitt would not have appeared stale, although it would not necessarily have appeared more intelligent. Now I find it cheap as well as stale; and the touches of profundity, the approach to the real truth through poetry and philosophy, does not come off. It has been O'Neill's distinction to stand aloof from vulgar habits of thought—and it does him no good to change his habits. The Guild's investiture of this shoddy is magnificent.

It surprised me to hear intelligent people during the last month uttering blasphemies about the Irish Players and I wondered whether the substitution of Sean O'Casey for Synge and Yeats and Lady Gregory was the reason; when they first came here, with poetic plays, intelligent opinion was all in their favour.

Mr O'Casey's comedy is broad and the players, particularly the principals, are beautiful artists who will not play broad comedy mincingly; the result is delicately right and altogether satisfactory. I would like again to see the Players in the old pieces, to see whether the turn of the Abbey Theatre from its original purposes has in any way diminished their virtues; without that comparison, I retain my faith in them; they seem to me inspired players.

Mr O'Casey's two plays, *THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS* and *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK*, are made on the same last; they are tragi-comedies of low life in Dublin at times of national crisis. The first one is easier for outsiders to understand because the crisis is during Easter Week of 1916—the struggle is between Ireland and Britain; in the second the politics, so to speak, is less

clear, the struggle is between the Free State and the Republicans. Yet the essential thing in both plays is perfectly expressed; the comedy is in character and situation, as it is in Molière, is often as simple as in Molière. The character drawing seems rough; one is a wastrel, another a termagant, another a pedant, another a sycophant; they are without subtlety, and yet they are full-bodied, they exist. And because they exist you follow them from comedy to tragedy with implicit belief.

About Mr O'Casey's comedy I feel something else which may be significant. In *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK* most of one act is concerned with a party given by tenement dwellers who believe themselves heirs to a small fortune. The phonograph is brought and played, the neighbours come in and sing and quarrel and make up to the fortunate family; everyone brags and pretends to gentility and drinks a little and is wholly commonplace. For several years our American dramatists have been writing satirical plays about just such people (the fact that they are usually richer in America does not matter). And none of them have got into their plays what Mr O'Casey has without even trying—a certain poetry which rises from the palpable truth of these people's lives. It is the lack of the poetry and of the truth that has wrecked our American satirists; they should go to school here and learn.

With *THE DEATH OF DANTON* and *THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS*, Reinhardt swung into his true orbit; the flummery of *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* was cast off. The second of these plays I reviewed from Vienna several years ago; it is delicious slapstick. Except that the young Thimig seems to me a little heavy for Harlequin, the production seems to me perfect.

*THE DANTON* was extraordinarily exciting for two thirds of the way and then collapsed into a number of dull things which can be collected under the general name of stupidity. There is the scene in which, according to the programme, "Leroix, Hérault, Danton and Camille have dark, defiant melancholy dialogues" (an understatement which takes no account of the absurd pallets upon which they lie and their heavy-handed farewells); there is the last scene of all when the condemned are carried past the guillotine and the stage is left empty of interest for a long time after which the final curtain falls on as meaningless an end as I have ever

seen. The whole play is absurd; the interest shifts from Danton to Robespierre, from him to Desmoulins, without transition and without sense.

And yet on the street, in the club, and before the tribunal, a tremendous thing takes place; the French Revolution creates itself. You never say, "Could it have been like that," only "This is how it must have been." Reinhardt's mastery of movement, of pace, of mass is all visible in these scenes, and he gives to them, moreover, an intensity of pitch which is unsurpassed.

Paul Hartmann's Danton moved me only at the moments when any one's Danton would have moved me; for instance when, being asked his name in the usual order of court procedure, he replies, "The Revolution knows my name." But Wladimir Sokoloff (Robespierre) and Arnold Korff (St Just) seemed to me of the very first order of players. I read, after the performance, Belloc's Robespierre and it interested me to note how perfectly Sokoloff had reproduced the physical habits of his character and, more significant, the spirit of the pedant and fanatic, and how all of that had been done without once suggesting archaeology. Of St Just I knew and know little; I assume accuracy in the presentation and, more significant, recognize an amazing talent. Mr Korff played here in English several years ago, unsuccessfully I believe; I saw him in a Pirandello play and was deeply impressed, but did not guess at his extraordinary delicacy and power. As for his voice, it is matchless.

GILBERT SELDES



## MODERN ART

NOT certain that millionaires subscribe in great numbers to THE DIAL and even less certain that those who do, do so for the sake of this particular department, I nevertheless feel emboldened to address a few remarks to these elusive members of society. Happening quite by chance to read the list of the year's events in the "new year" edition of one of our powerful newspapers, I was struck by the fact that not a cent had been recorded as having been left, by the men who died during the year, to benefit living artists. The total sum of benefactions was staggeringly great, and almost every conceivable enterprise, from the Camp for Bank Workers to the Training School for Girl Scout Leaders, got helped impressively. The unfortunate individuals who profess the Fine Arts in the United States alone were "passed up." It is true there was one bequest to art—and a great one. Mr Libby, the late glass-manufacturer, actually left twenty millions of dollars to the Toledo Art Museum, but since our museums now are forced to spend millions in mere maintenance (coal-bills, salaries, etc.,) it is easy to see why, under existing arrangements, being obliged to do so much for the dead painters, they cannot do much for the living ones. It is of course excellent that somebody should pay the coal-bills, but is it not really too modest and self-effacing on the part of these millionaires that they should all be content with so limited a renown? Who cares, an hundred years hence, who pays the coal-bills? But an individual who helps an actual artist to fame shares in that fame everlastingly. Vainglory for vainglory there is no comparison between the two exploits. And I hope I don't give offence—and mar the argument—by employing such a word for it. The wish to create an enduring monument must be back of all great bequests and there can be no shame attached to such a wish. But think what far-reaching consequences would attend upon the spending of a million a year upon living artists! The individual who could manage that would rival Pericles and eclipse Lorenzo.

That I am not myself a person to flinch at the word "vainglory" is proved sufficiently by the fact that I did pose for a portrait by



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HENRY McBRIDE. BY GASTON LACHAISE

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Gaston Lachaise, the sculptor. When Lachaise first suggested the idea I said what I honestly thought, that it couldn't be done, that I was not a type for artists, that never in my life had a painter wished to do me, and that I was enough of an artist myself to see precisely why they didn't. I was wrong, Lachaise insisted, looking at me with that curiously appraising glance that is so disconcerting to some people, "there was something," he had felt it for some time, he knew definitely what he wished to do, et cetera, and in short—to boil the argument of half an hour into one sentence—I finally consented. This was last spring, at the close of the season, when all New Yorkers and especially the critics who had been compelled to study thirty to forty thousand pictures during the winter, were at the lowest ebb of vitality. If posterity were to peep at one, one might have preferred another moment. One might have been more there in the autumn, for instance. "But after all," I reflected, mounting waves of satisfaction completely engulfing me, "the affair is Lachaise's, not mine. Why should a mere sitter choose the moment, or choose the pose, or choose anything," and I remembered the famous nonchalance of Walt Whitman when getting photographed, and his explanation that he never "dressed up" for portraits and that their invariable success was due to his refusal to be fussed by a camera; and I resolved to keep calm.

So the posing began. It was very pleasant. There was something peculiarly soothing in the thought that Lachaise had it to do and not I. Lachaise "had been studying me for some time." He had "an idea of me." Gained from my writings, no doubt, for, after all, we had never had many talks! The green wax that sculptors use nowadays took form rapidly. Somewhat to my surprise it took on heroic proportions. So that was what Lachaise thought of me! Well, it's gratifying, say what you like, to have someone look on your bright side. By two or three sittings there was a definite character indicated. Oh, very heroic. But very heroic. Mussolini! Yes! Even more so. I had moments of compunction, feeling perhaps I was taking an unfair advantage of the sculptor. I thought of confessing that I was not, habitually, a Mussolini. Then I remembered Walt Whitman and decided to keep mum. Even so, I felt I ought to die at once before the truth came out. Besides, I argued, I *am* a hero—at times. I am one of those persons who when alone in their sanctums are unafraid of the truth. In

public it may be a different matter. Face to face with one of those artists who have the bad taste to haunt their own one-man exhibitions, I have been known to reply to his enquiry with a "Yes, very interesting indeed," and then rush right home and scribble a review beginning with "These are positively the world's worst pictures."

But I did not die at once. Heroism for heroism I had not quite enough for that. The sittings went on. On certain days the green wax appeared to remain stationary. At other times the sculptor flung himself furiously at the work just as sculptors do in novels and in the autobiography of Benvenuto which is practically a novel. After one of these paroxysms, rather more prolonged than usual, Lachaise, in a small voice and almost apologetically, said, "Well, it is finished. I won't do any more," and I took a look. Mussolini had vanished almost completely! There was still a faint trace of him. But the subconscious part of Lachaise, the part that does the work, evidently thought I was but a modified form of hero. Well, I hastily decided, it was perhaps just as well. It would be fatiguing, at my time of life, to try to outshine Mussolini. Also, there were compensations. I was more refined than he. Refined and at the same time chastened. The refinement was due, no doubt, to suffering. I was glad to see that I had got something, after all, from what I had gone through. That person in the green wax might weep but he would march straight through to Calvary, nevertheless. Not totally unlike the famous Judd so recently and rightly electrocuted by the State authorities at Sing Sing. But refined! That was the main thing. On the whole I thought I came out of it very well. I was quite content with my experience as a *poseur*. I will recommend the idea, henceforth, with more courage to others.

HENRY MCBRIDE

## MUSICAL CHRONICLE

TO bridge the season between Mengelberg and Toscanini, the Philharmonic's choice of guest conductors seems to have been fortunate, since both Sir Thomas Beecham and Bernardino Molinari were able to contribute some meteoric quality to their descent. Sir Thomas preceded. The three Handel numbers, new to the orchestra, with which he opened his first programme were presented as something nervous and theatrical, quite removed from the more staid Handel of the Messiah to which one is accustomed. And in keeping, the Mozart symphony developed traits of great assertiveness, was even brassy perhaps. In these pieces there was disclosed a general busyness more to be expected of later composers who particularly aimed for such things. The conductor seemed to be interpreting somewhat in terms of Berlioz or Wagner—and thus one may understand the athleticism which he later brought to Berlioz and Wagner themselves, in the Chasse Royale et l'Orage and the prelude to the Meistersinger. He seemed to have a way of making his pauses shorter than one was led to anticipate, and of introducing new instruments into the *mêlée* with an over-promptness which caught us unawares, a procedure which may also have been made more effective by contrast with the several months of Mengelberg's comparative stolidity. In the soloist for the Tschai-kowsky piano concerto moreover, in Vladimir Horowitz, the conductor seemed to find the very projection of himself—and the audience, caught in an enthusiasm of sheer speed and volume, could do no less than continue the furious *fortissimo* where the virtuoso left off. The evening was, in sum, bacchantic.

Signor Molinari was possibly less of a personality—which may have accounted in part for his greater versatility. But his predilection was for a more precious kind of music, as not only his conducting, but also his own orchestral transcription of Debussy's *L'Isle Joyeuse* testified. Certain salon pieces, which seem with Mengelberg to be taken as a duty, became under his baton charming, and even purposive. But his own distinction could betray him, as in the attention which he lavished fruitlessly upon the Rossini overture to *Semiramide*.

Who (and this in defence of the guest conductor) can object to a system whereby a man appears with his bag of tricks and is gone again before they are exhausted? Any one conducting for years would presumably evolve a small repertoire of works in which he was more or less a specialist; and the guest conductor can generally confine himself to these examples of his maximum understanding. To the objection that the virtues of such a method are not the soundest musically, one may ask what are the Mosaic laws of aesthetic enjoyment. Even a contrast of conductors may be in itself an authentic contribution, though not often reproducible. . . . In the case of the Philharmonic, the effacement of the orchestra should also be commented upon—the rapidity of its accommodation to other doctrines, its responsiveness as impersonal as that of some made instrument.

The League of Composers, First Concert in 1927-1928: Modern Music of 1600 and 1927. Thus, the two ends of a musical tradition, juxtaposed in one evening for our keener comparison. With the exception of Hindemith's *Landsknechtstrinklied*, the halting of the medium recommended the programme more to our curiosity than to our enjoyment. Joseph Yasser seemed to play the organ numbers with a uniform scepticism and under-emphasis which were somewhat depressing—and it is not clear why 1927 should have been represented by Hindemith and Sessions alone. Recalling the male choir of the Vatican Singers, who covered much this same sixteenth-century territory earlier in the season, we should say that the present "solo unit" seemed constrained, as though clinging resolutely to the tenuous melodies—all with the exception of the solo soprano, Greta Torpadie, whose recital of the songs from Hindemith's *Das Marienleben* was as assured as is Hindemith himself. It must be no mean feat to maintain the logic of one's voice against the odds of a Hindemith accompaniment, where the piano is so often pursuing interests of its own, or recapitulating too late, or becoming involved in seeming forgetfulness of the song.

This "quiet evening" is but so much more evidence that modern art is now without a *Bundschuh*. There is no longer any categorical hysteria making for either the acceptance or the rejection of any brand of work. The usual symphony concert is not a programme,

but a museum. It is unthinkable that an audience's welcoming of widely divergent modern composers is founded upon sympathy; it must, rather, originate in a kind of blanket endorsement, in the substitution of a questioning attitude for a dictating one. A new medium has, in a sense, been accepted without naturalization. Henceforth perhaps artists themselves will have to provide their own intolerance.

KENNETH BURKE



## COMMENT

**A**N art not dissociated from writing is handwriting and what might at first be an idle or curious interest in the significance of one's capitals and small letters can lead to the mending of serious defects of character. There are various published expositions of the principles of graphology, a new one having just been added;<sup>1</sup> and even more engrossing, are the "artistic and paleographical criticisms" of Roger Fry and E. A. Lowe, in a Tract on English handwriting<sup>2</sup> compiled under the auspices of The Society for Pure English. Doctor Lowe finds "an increase in freedom, boldness, and originality . . . in the performances of the last half-century." Mr Fry feels that free writing at its best "appears to surpass in sheer linear beauty any kind of writing in which the letters are formed consciously" and says, "Perhaps the most interesting result for me of the whole inquiry has been the discovery that the aesthetic excellence of a handwriting depends so little on the unit forms chosen." The specimens reproduced provoke study and tempt comparison with specimens not reproduced—with a spacious, compact, versatile page by Molière in The British Museum, a romantic Erasmus and a polite Newton in the Fitzwilliam Museum, and with specimens one has seen of handwriting by Gordon Craig, Doctor von Bode, Havelock Ellis, John Eglinton, and other contemporaries. The hesitantly experienced antennaelike candour of Mr Fry's judgements in this matter—and a certain elegant obduracy in plate 28—prepossessingly emphasize

<sup>1</sup> *Mind Your P's and Q's*. By Jerome S. Meyer. Illustrated. 8vo. 137 pages. Simon and Schuster. \$1.50. See also: *Character From Handwriting*. By Louise Rice. Illustrated. 8vo. 374 pages. Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$5.

<sup>2</sup> *S. P. E. Tract No. XXIII. English Handwriting. With Thirty-four Facsimile Plates and Artistic & Paleographical Criticism*. By Roger Fry & E. A. Lowe. 8vo. 99 pages. Oxford University Press, American Branch. \$3.50.

the axiom that aesthetic dogma sometimes gains importance inversely as it pre-empts it.

TO accept congratulation is almost like self-gratulation; nevertheless praise from contemporaries is grateful. A brother journal, published week-day afternoons in Denver, finds our verses, articles, and short stories, capital and a contributor—one might say a cousin, for we are less ashamed of nepotism than of seeming to quote without acknowledgement—said not long ago in the office that he was pleased we had offered *The Dial* Award to Ezra Pound; that Mr Pound has the intuitive mind in a degree to which few people have it, "a mind that moves back and forth like sea-weed."

We confessed to admiring instinctiveness, concentration, and positiveness; to realizing that gusto is not incompatible with learning, and to favouring opulence in asceticism. It is apparent also in lines by Sung Lien<sup>1</sup> that such liking is not recent:

"In the dormitory I had two meals a day, but nothing fresh, fat, or of any good taste. All other schoolmates were dressed up in fine silk and with embroidery; their hats were decorated with jewels; their girdles made of white jade. Every one bore a sword on his left, and perfume at his right. They looked as shining and dignified as angels. While living among them I wore my cotton robe and tattered clothes, but had not the slightest desire to be like them, for I had my enjoyment focused upon something different, knowing not that my bodily wants were not as well supplied as those of others."

It is possible to conceive of victory achieved at a leap. If overconfident, however, or over-curious with regard to the manner of a career, one could not fail to derive benefit from the kind, if uncomfortably practical advice to young actors, which George

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the Chinese by Kwei Chen. *Literary Magazine of The University of Wisconsin*, December, 1927.

Arliss gives in his memoirs. In accepting it one seems not to picture oneself incommoded by a storm of applause. His honourable and unusual convictions with regard to punctuality are particularly impressive—and the sin that it is for one man to waste the time of another, however great that man's position may be by comparison.

**A. E.** IS here, and having held out a welcome to him for many years, it is not likely that, as the newspapers suggest, we shall confuse his identity with that of George W. Erskine Russell, of Bertrand Russell, or of another. At first not quite hearing him since our fellow-townsmen are, under excitement, spectators rather than audience, but entirely believing him, we can accept his implication that poetry is invariably at the core of reanimation in Ireland.

Susceptible to Irish magic in its various strengths, we cannot say we are not enchanted with disenchantment in *The Plough and the Stars*; that we are indifferent to certain of James Joyce's lyrics "carved from the air and coloured with the air" as Mr Russell denotes them; or to George Moore's "novel," *Hail and Farewell*.

The Venerable Bede finds that "when some persons have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately expelled the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling." And we are grateful that there should have been administered to our restiveness, the poems and thoughts which Mr Russell has brought us.

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